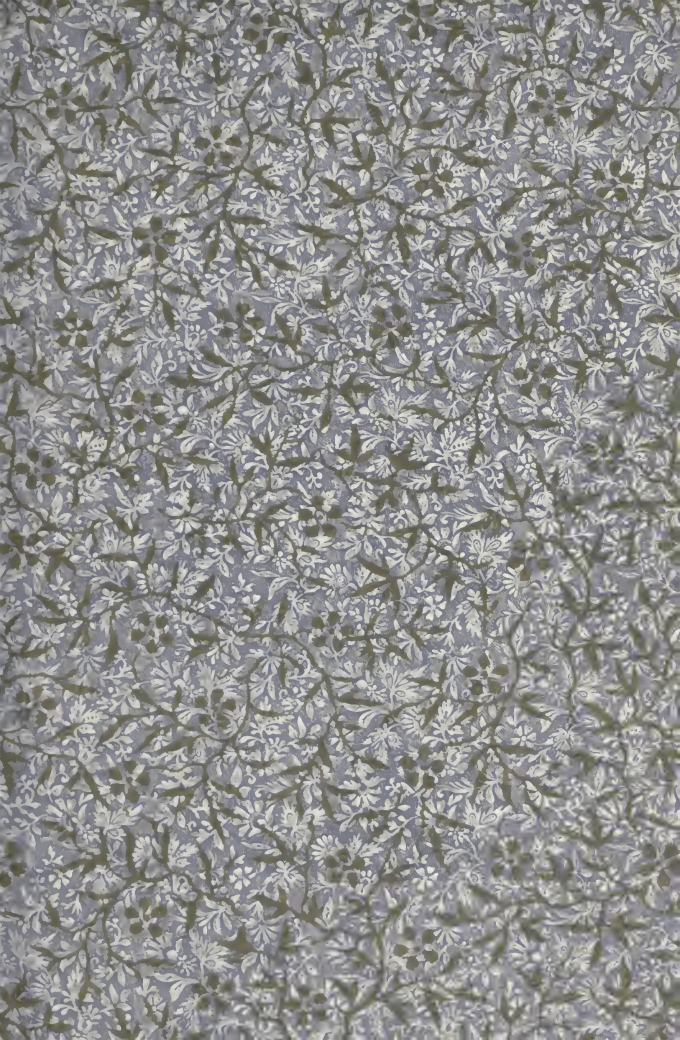


ORR'S
PICTORIAL GUIDE
TO
NIAGARA FALLS
1842





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VIEW FROM PROSPECT POINT.

PICTORIAL GUIDE
TO THE
FALLS OF NIAGARA:
A
MANUAL FOR VISITERS,
GIVING AN ACCOUNT OF THIS
STUPENDOUS NATURAL WONDER;
AND ALL
THE OBJECTS OF CURIOSITY IN ITS VICINITY;
WITH EVERY
HISTORICAL INCIDENT OF INTEREST:
AND
ALSO FULL DIRECTIONS FOR VISITING THE CATARACT
AND ITS NEIGHBOURING SCENES.

ILLUSTRATED BY NUMEROUS
MAPS, CHARTS, AND ENGRAVINGS,
FROM ORIGINAL SURVEYS AND DESIGNS.

THE ILLUSTRATIONS DESIGNED AND ENGRAVED
BY J. W. ORR.

BUFFALO:
PRESS OF SALISBURY AND CLAPP.

.....

1842.

Entered according to Act of Congress, by
JOHN W. ORR,
in the Clerk's Office of the Northern District of New-York,
in the year 1842.

THOS. NEWELL, TYPOG'R.

INTRODUCTION.



THE wonderful cataract of Niagara, the most grand and stupendous natural curiosity in the world, is annually visited by so many thousands of people from the different countries of Europe and America, that a work which shall serve the purpose of a GUIDE to the Falls, and point out, in a plain perspicuous manner, a judicious routine of observation, so that the stranger may be enabled, by its assistance alone, to find his way without loss of time or unnecessary toil, to every place which it is desirable to visit, and every point from which a good view may be obtained, must be a desideratum to the travelling public.

A work, which in addition to this, embodies a full account of this remarkable phenomenon, and the region of wild and picturesque beauty in which it is situate, illustrated and embellished by accurate maps, and numerous engravings, from original and careful surveys and drawings, must present still stronger claims to popular regard, and

be, indeed, indispensable to the Niagara visitant. It was the hope and wish of the author, to render this such a work, — to embody all that is known of the Falls, and the strait by which they are formed ; with full, yet concise directions to the visiter, for prosecuting his examination of the cataract and other interesting objects of curiosity, in their neighbourhood ; and a brief, but full account of the leading historical, and fortuitous events, which have transpired at the Falls, or in their vicinity, down to the present date ; and to enrich it with maps, charts, and engravings, — to make it, in short, not only useful, and even essential to the traveller, but interesting and ornamental, — such a work as must prove to the purchaser of *real* utility and value. To what extent we have succeeded in this hope, is for others to determine.

The author disclaims any attempt to *describe* the Falls of Niagara, simply, because they are indescribable. Others may, perhaps, imagine they have succeeded in doing this, as people have been silly enough to fancy they could quadrature the circle, generate perpetual motion, and achieve other like impossibilities. But the public must be aware — though they may not be — of how utterly they have failed to express even a shadow of the colossal grandeur and divine sublimity of the scene.

All that can be done by the most gifted, is to point out the best places of observation, and instruct the reader how to examine the wonders and glories of Niagara, by calling his attention to a few general characteristics of the cataract, and to individual features of particular parts ; but to give a person, who has never seen the Falls, any definite idea of their ineffable beauty and majesty, is immeasurably beyond the art of any writer however talented, of any painter, however happy in the impress of his genius.

A few words on the subject of our arrangement. The most simple plan is always the best. The one suggested by the natural situation and order of things and events, is that we have adopted, because it is free from obscurity and complexity ; and every portion falls into its proper place, as if by its own specific gravity ; — the First Part, treating of the Niagara Strait, its topography and leading characteristics, and the towns, villages, fortifications, and other improvements on its borders ; the Second, of the Falls, and other remarkable scenes in their vicinity ; to every part of which, in proper succession, the reader is 'GUIDED' by full directions, easy to be understood, and to follow ; and the Third and last, of the history of the Falls, and of the casualties, adventures, incidents, etc. which

might be supposed interesting to peruse, and desirable to know.

Cherishing the hope, that we have in this volume, produced a "GUIDE TO THE FALLS," of pleasing aspect and agreeable manners; one, that neither morose, indifferent, nor yet too garrulous, has honesty without insolence, vivacity without caprice, and enthusiasm without affectation; we commend this, our first literary bantling, to the castigation of critics, by which it may be improved, and to the favour of the public, by whom we hope to be rewarded.

NOTE.—Since this work has been in press, some changes and improvements have been made. Our friend, Mr. C. B. Griffin, has taken the Clifton House, from which Mr. Chrysler has retired. Whether or not, the Eagle Hotel will pass into new hands, is yet undecided. At the Mineral Spring, a Boarding House, and Baths have been erected, for the accommodation of visitors, and particularly invalids. The sixty-seventh British Infantry have been ordered home to England. These are the most important.

BUFFALO, APRIL, 1842.

DIRECTIONS TO VISITERS.



AVING arrived at the Falls, and chosen your hotel, enter your name on the register, secure your room, procure a copy of the PICTORIAL GUIDE TO NIAGARA FALLS, which contains many views of the cataract, and other objects of interest, in its vicinity, and full directions for finding all the best points of view, so as to employ your time to the most advantage, and proceed at once, to Prospect Point, from which you have the best view of the Falls, on the American side. Feast your eyes on the splendid scenery of river, banks, rapids, and cascades, as long as you desire ; and then pass up the stream and along the shore to the bridge. Cross that to Bath Island, register your name, pay twenty-five cents toll, and then continue on to Iris Island. Having ascended the bank, turn to the right, and follow the path to the lower end of the Island. Gaze there as long as you list, at the Central and American Falls, and the magnificent vista of river and cliff below,

and then cross the bridge to Prospect Island, and enjoy a most magnificent view of the American Fall.

Returning to Iris Island, pass on round it, till you reach the great Fall. Descend the bank to the Terrapin Bridge, and from the rocks at its extremity, behold majesty, immensity, power, grandeur, and beauty! Next ascend the Terrapin Tower, and gaze around, above, below. Now, retrace your steps to the Biddle Stair-case, procure a proper dress, and descend the shaft to the base of the precipice. From the foot of the Stair-case, pass up to the British Fall, and bend your wondering gaze upon the floods that come tumbling down the cliff, far, far above you, and fall in foam and thunder at your feet. Pass behind the sheet as far as you can or dare; and returning, make your way back to the Stair-case, pass it by, and continue on to the Central Fall, and the Cave of the Winds. Pause for a moment, to survey the scene of wonder above and around you; descend the giant steps, enter the regions of thunder and spray, and to the last hour of your life, you will never forget that cave, its sights, and sounds. Returning, ascend the Biddle steps, change your dress, pay the charge, and then complete the circuit of Iris Island, and re-crossing the bridge, rest

and refresh yourself for a brief season, at your hotel, or elsewhere.

That done, proceed to the Ferry Stairs, descend, take a view of the American Fall from its foot, pass behind the sheet, if you like, and then cross the river. From the centre of the stream, you have a view of the Falls beyond conception grand. On landing, pay your ferriage, eighteen and three fourths cents, and ascend by a smooth carriage road, to the top of the bank, where another glorious view of the Falls is presented. Proceed along the brow of the bank to Table Rock, and if the sublime and beautiful have any charms for you, or the awful and terrible any power to thrill, you cannot there remain unmoved.

At the building, just below Table Rock, procure a change of dress, and a guide, and then descend the winding stairs, and pass up to the foot of the Horse-shoe Fall. Give to the grandeur of this scene a few moments' observation, and then follow your guide through the driving spray, to Termination Rock, one hundred and fifty feet behind the hanging tapestry of floods. That scene will never fade from your memory—it is grand, impressive, and even awful. Emerging from this home of the mist-throned thunder, ascend the stairs, change your dress, register your name, re-

ceive a certificate, pay the charge, and return along the bank to the Museum.

A short visit to this fine collection of natural and artificial curiosities, will not be regretted. From the piazza, you can enjoy a glorious view of the whole crescent of cataracts, the rapids above and the abyss below. Leaving the Museum, return to the ferry, cross the river, and regain your hotel. You have seen enough for once, now rest and refresh yourself, reflect upon what you have beheld, examine your GUIDE BOOK, and decide what points you are next to visit.

In Part II. of this work, more particular directions are given for such a round of observation, as that sketched above, which is designed only for a kind of general index or chart, to guide the visiter in his first impatient movements. Take the book with you, refer to it as occasion suggests, or requires, and you will not only be *guided right*, but will *overlook nothing*.

If you arrive at the Falls on the Canada side, the order of your examination will be so far reversed, that you will first visit the several points and obtain the views mentioned as on that shore, and then, crossing the ferry, be guided by the directions given above.

CONTENTS.

PART I.

NIAGARA STRAIT AND THE BORDERING SETTLEMENTS.

CHAPTER I.

The Cataract—how formed—River—St. Lawrence—Supply of waters—Situation of the Falls—Origin and meaning of the name—Climate—Animate and inanimate life—General aspect—Natural religion—Inducements to visitors—Routes of approach:—Page, 17

CHAPTER II.

Buffalo—its situation—harbour—light-house—history—buildings—hotels—Rathbun—his enterprise—Forgeries—imprisonment—fate—The Exchange—The City—its prospects—Steam and other boats—Government Works—Excursions—Rail-roads—Conveyance to the Falls:—Page, . 27

CHAPTER III.

Fort Erie—situation and architecture—surrender—siege—Ruins—Waterloo—Black Rock—Rivalry—General Porter—Tonawanda—village and creek—catfish and agues—Schlosser Landing—Chippewa—Creek—Battle Ground—Fort Schlosser:—Page, 41

CHAPTER IV.

Village of Niagara Falls—Eagle Hotel—Mr. Hooker and sons—Cataract Hotel—Gen. Whitney—Niagara Falls Hotel—Rathbun's enterprise—City of the Falls—Clifton—Clifton House—Col. Chrysler—Pavilion Hotel—Camera Obscura—Museum, etc.:—Page, 51

CHAPTER V.

Mountain plain—Lewiston—Queenston—Youngstown—Niagara Village—Fort George—Fort Massasauga—Fort Niagara—Traditions—Indian incursions—Surprisal—Abduc-

tion and murder of Morgan — Repairs — Additions and Armament: — Page, 65

CHAPTER VI.

Niagara Strait — breadth — depth — rapids — general appearance — navigation — Steam Boats — Fulton — Islands — Grand Island — Boston Timber Company — Village — Mills — Vessels destroyed — Buck-horn Island — Navy Island — Military occupation: — Page, 75

CHAPTER VII.

Niagara River — course and velocity — loveliness — divisions and characteristics — height of banks — depth — breadth — descent of the stream — Retrocession of the Falls — Concluding remarks: — Page, 84

PART II.

THE CATARACT AND OTHER OBJECTS OF CURIOSITY.

CHAPTER I.

Apostrophe to the Falls — First feeling — General features — The Rapids — Cascades — Form and size of the Cataract — Spray — The Abyss — Water carried over — Roar — Barometrical — Vibrations of the Earth — Hues and Tints — Scenery — Summer — Autumn — Winter — Ice-Bridge — Design of the Creator: — Page, 93

CHAPTER II.

Preliminary Remarks — Directions — Prospect Point — View on the Canada Side — Views on the American Side — Prospect Place — American Fall — Ware's Observatory — Bridge to Bath Island — Toll House — Mr. Jacobs — Mastodon Tooth — Ship and Brig Islands — Lover's Retreat — Popping the Question: — Page, 111

CHAPTER III.

Iris Island — Names, Initials and Dates on the Trees — The

Hog's Back—Central Fall—Prospect Island—View of the American Fall—Other Islands—Profiles on the rock—Rainbow—Terrapin Bridge and Rocks—Horse-shoe Fall—Prospect Tower:—Page, 121

CHAPTER IV.

Biddle Stair-case—Angling—Sam Patch—Mr. Smith—Fancied Danger—British Fall—Lower Fishing-Rock—Cave of the Winds—Foot of Prospect Island—Passing under the American Fall—Circuit of the Island—Encroachment of the River—Moss Island—Three Sisters—Head of Iris Island—Mounds and Skeletons:—Page, 131

CHAPTER V.

Ferry Stairs—Catlin's Cave—Giant Cave—View from the River—Road up the Bank—Grand view of the Falls—View from Table Rock—Table Rock—Disruptions—Varied appearance of the Fall—Starkey's Rooms—Staircase—View from below—Termination Rock—Museum—Camera Obscura—Iris Island at night:—Page, 147

CHAPTER VI.

Remarks and Advice—Good Counsel—Public Garden—Road down the Bank—Indian Ladder—Point View—Mineral Spring—View of the cataract—Whirlpool Rapids—Whirlpool Lodge—Whirlpool—Bodies—Descent—Varied Aspect—Raft in the Whirlpool—Devil's Hole—Hewlett's Cellar—Lewiston Heights:—Page, 166

CHAPTER VII.

Queenston Heights—Brock's Monument—blown up—Cove or Chasm—Whirlpool—Bencackie Point, view from—Muddy Run—Cascade—Bank opposite—Bender's Cave—Improvements—Channel—Lundy's Lane—Street's Point—Burning Spring—Bridgewater—Chippewa—Battle ground—Concluding Remarks:—Page, 182

PART III.

HISTORICAL SKETCH, ACCIDENTS AND ADVENTURES.

CHAPTER I.

Early History of the Falls—French Establishments—Expedition of La Salle—Hennepin's tour of Exploration—other visitors—Changes in the Cataract—Want of Data, etc, . 199

CHAPTER II.

Accidents at the Falls—Traditionary Reminiscence—Loss of the Boat Independence—Other Casualties—Death of Dr. Hungerford—Concluding Remarks:—Page, 206

CHAPTER III.

Vessels sent over the Falls—Schooner Michigan—Schooner Superior—Ship Detroit—Sublime Spectacle—Adventurous Daring—Danger and rescue of Chapin—of Allen—the Meed of Merit:—Page, 210

CHAPTER IV.

Patriot occupation of Navy Island—Employ of the Caroline—Misrepresentation and Resolve—Caroline Attacked—Durfee murdered—Vessel fired and sent over the Falls—Evacuation of the Island:—Page, 214

CHAPTER V.

Hermit of the Falls—his arrival at Niagara—effect of the scenery—his habits, manners, and endowments—residence and death—other particulars:—Page, 221

CHAPTER VI.

Massacre at the Devil's Hole:—British Convoy—Indian Ambuscade—Attack, Surprise, Defeat, Catastrophe—Escape of Steadman and one other—Relics, etc.:—Page, . . 224

CHAPTER VII.

Noah's Folly:—Brilliant Conception—Unparalleled Proclamation—Magnificent Pageantry—Memorials of these Wonderful Events—Sublime Finale:—Page, 229



1442



PICTORIAL GUIDE
TO
NIAGARA FALLS.

PART I.

NIAGARA STRAIT
AND THE
BORDERING SETTLEMENTS.

"Unchanging form! unceasing roar!
Niagara,— what art thou?
Spray—Thunder—Foam—
The breath—the voice—the robes of God!"

NIAGARA.

There's nothing great or bright, thou glorious Fall!
Thou may'st not to the fancy's sense recall —
The thunder-riven cloud, the lightning's leap,
The stirring of the chambers of the deep,
Earth's emerald green, and many-tinted dyes,
The fleecy-whiteness of the upper skies,
The tread of armies, thick'ning as they come,
The boom of cannon, and the beat of drum,
The brow of beauty, and the form of grace,
The passion, and the prowess of our race,
The song of Homer in its loftiest hour,
The unresisted sweep of Roman power,
Britannia's trident on the azure sea,
America's young shout of liberty !

Oh ! may the wars that madden in thy deeps,
There spend their rage, nor climb th' encircling steeps ;
And, till the conflict of thy surges cease,
The Nations on thy banks repose in peace !

MORPETH.

Nov. 3, 1841.

PICTORIAL GUIDE TO NIAGARA FALLS.

CHAPTER I.

THE CATARACT—HOW FORMED—RIVER—ST. LAWRENCE—
SUPPLY OF WATERS—SITUATION OF THE FALLS—ORIGIN AND
MEANING OF THE NAME—CLIMATE—ANIMATE AND INANI-
MATE LIFE—GENERAL ASPECT—NATURAL RELIGION—IN-
DUCEMENTS TO VISITERS—ROUTES OF APPROACH.

NIAGARA.

Shrine of Omnipotence! How vast, how grand,
How awful, yet how beautiful art thou!
Pillar'd around by everlasting hills,
Robed in the drapery of descending floods,
Crowned by the rainbow, canopied by clouds
That roll in incense up from thy dread base,
Hid by their mantling o'er the vast abyss,
Upon whose verge thou standest, whence ascends
The mighty anthem of thy Maker's praise,
Hymn'd in eternal thunders!



NATURE has many waterfalls, a few cataracts—ONE NIAGARA! That stands alone, vast, grand, indescribable!—the mighty alembic in which the world of waters is refined and etherealized!—the august throne upon which

Nature sits, clothed in the glorious attributes of power and beauty!—the everlasting altar, at whose cloud-wrapt base the elements pay homage to Omnipotence!—The floods that pour down its tremendous heights, seem gushing from the opened heavens, and plunging into the depths of the unfathomable abyss!—Air groans, earth trembles, deep calleth unto deep, and answering thunders roll up the vast empyrean! Like a seething hell the gulf below sends up the smoke of its torment, and the foam of agony thickens upon the face of the dread profound, while far above upon the verge of the precipice, sits the sweet Iris—like faith upon a dying martyr's brow—arching the fearful chasm with its outspread arms, and smiling through all the terrors of the scene.

Bright bow of Promise!

Sit ever thus upon the beetling brow
Of the dread cataract, which but for thee
Were all too terrible:—Smile ever thus,
Making that beautiful which else were hideous.

This cataract, the most wonderful and amazing curiosity in the natural world, is formed by the precipitous descent of the river Niagara down a ledge of rocks of more than one hundred and sixty feet perpendicular height, into an abyss or basin below, of unknown, but probably much greater

depth. The river Niagara is that portion of the St. Lawrence, by which the lakes Erie and Ontario* are united. It is the outlet by which the vast volume of surplus waters of those great inland seas, Erie, Huron, Michigan, Superior, and of the St. Clair and other smaller lakes and streams, is poured into lake Ontario, from whence, by the river and gulf of St. Lawrence, it finds its way to the Atlantic ocean. The St. Lawrence is one of the largest and longest rivers on the globe, having its source in the rocky mountains, many hundred feet above the level of the sea, and distant from the ocean into which it flows, more than two thousand miles.

Some idea of the immense quantity of water forced over the falls of Niagara, may be formed from the fact, that the lakes and tributaries which supply the river Niagara, cover a surface of not less than one hundred and fifty thousand square miles; and contain, as nearly as can be estimated, about one half of all the fresh water on the globe. The land surface drained by this vast extent of lakes and rivers, measures scarcely less than half a million of square miles. While the earth and

* This lake was formerly called Lake FRONTENAC, after a French Count of that name, who was erst Governor of Canada.

the operations of nature continue without material change, Niagara must ever exhibit a scene of undiminished grandeur and sublimity.

This stupendous cataract is situate in latitude $43^{\circ} 6'$ north, and longitude $2^{\circ} 6'$ west from Washington. It is twenty-two miles north from the efflux of the river, at Lake Erie ; and fourteen miles south, from the introgression of the stream into Lake Ontario. The whole length of the river is therefore, thirty-six miles—its general course is a few points to the west of north. Though commonly called a river, this portion of the St. Lawrence is, more properly speaking, a STRAIT, connecting as above mentioned, the lakes Erie and Ontario, and conducting the superfluous waters of the great seas and streams above, through a broad and divided, and afterwards compressed, devious and irregular channel, to the latter lake, into which it empties—the point of union being about forty miles from the western extremity of the lake.

Niagara is a word of Indian origin—the orthography, accentuation, and meaning of which are variously given by different authors. It is highly probable that this diversity might be accounted for and explained, by tracing the appellation through the dialects of the several tribes of aborigines, who formerly inhabited the neighbouring country.

Such an investigation, however interesting to the philologist, would present but little attraction to the general reader, and is therefore quite foreign to our present purpose. There is reason to believe that the etymon belongs to the language of the Iroquois, and signifies the *Thunder of Waters*. The word Niagara has also been defined "*a large neck (or strait) of water,*" — "*across the neck (or strait) of water,*" — "*a fall of water,*" — "*broken water,*" — "*running water,*" — "*the voice of waters,*" etc. That this name was applied by the natives to the river (or strait) as well as to the cataract itself, is certain: — adjectively, it has been retained by both — substantively, it should belong to the latter.

The climate of Niagara is in the highest degree healthful and invigorating. The atmosphere, constantly acted upon by the rushing water, the noise and the spray, is kept pure, refreshing, and salutary. There are no stagnant pools or marshes near, to send abroad their fœtid exhalations, and noxious miasmas, poisoning the air and producing disease. The face of the country for miles around, though nearly level, or but slightly undulating, is yet so elevated, as to be neither damp, disagreeable, nor unwholesome. No pestilential or epidemic complaints ever infest this spot; — it is sacred from

their approach. Even the cholera kept aloof from its raging waters.

Sweet-breathing herbs, and beautiful wild flowers spring up spontaneously even on the sides, and in the crevices of the giant rocks; and luxuriant clusters of firs and other fine forest trees, cover the islands, crown the cliffs, and overhang the banks of Niagara, where their emerald foliage waltzes with the feather-footed spray to the music of its roar, and they grow and gladden in the bounty of its breath and the joy of its presence.

Here are no moschetoës to annoy, no reptiles to alarm, and no wild animals to intimidate;—yet there is life and vivacity. The many-hued butterfly sips ambrosia from the fresh-opened honey-cup—birds carol their lays of love among the spray-starred branches—and the lively squirrel skips chattering from tree to tree. Varieties of water-fowl sport among the rapids, the sea-gull plays around the precipice, and the Eagle—the banner-bird of freedom—hovers above the cataract, plumes his grey pinions in its curling mists, and makes his home among the giant firs of its inaccessible islands.

Around the Falls all is soft, yet exciting—the cataract itself, terrible yet attractive. It has a fearful yet fascinating beauty, a dreadful but alluring greatness. Apt emblem of Divinity! it awes

while it invites—and while it commands reverence, it secures affection. Nature, as if by a revelation of her beauty and majesty, to teach us a religion in which justice is softened by mercy, and authority sweetened by love, has here concentrated her powers of thrilling and exciting, and gathered round one holy spot of earth all that can awe and terrify, with all that inspires and delights.

The great features of Niagara are ever the same, but their individual expression is constantly changing. With every season, with every sunbeam, with every shade they assume a different appearance, inspire a fresh interest, and exact a new admiration.

Serenes skies and a more salubrious atmosphere are nowhere to be found. Add to this the ocean-formed, rock-pillared, cloud-mantled tataract, and the marvels and glories by which this most sublime and stupendous of all natural wonders is surrounded, and what man or woman possessing leisure and means, would not desire to visit Niagara, if but to pay the homage of a day's admiration at this altar and type of the Eternal. An hour at the foot of Niagara would amply reward a pilgrimage from Timbuctoo or Pekin; and yet one can scarcely begin to realize its

grandeur, immensity, sublimity, and beauty, in less than the lapse of days.

No place on the civilized earth offers such attractions and inducements to visiters as Niagara, and they can never be fully known except to those who see them, from the utter impossibility of describing such a scene as this wonderful cataract presents:—when motion can be expressed by colour, there will be some hope of imparting a faint idea of it—but until that can be done, Niagara must remain undescribed.

The invalid may here find rest, refreshment, healthful exercise, and pure air, and that gentle exhilaration of mental and bodily spirits, so desirable in all cases, and often so necessary to a speedy recovery. The convalescent will here be relieved from the languor of weakness, and much of the danger of relapse, by the pleasurable excitement scenes of such extreme beauty and majesty must ever produce. The business man, desirous of escaping for a time the troublous round of toil and care in which he commonly moves, can here enjoy his leisure, and dignify his relaxation. The merchant or planter, flying for a season from the fever-smitten cities and fields of the south, will find here the safety he covets, and the happiness he cannot but desire.

The man of science can nowhere else find such an ample field for research, nor a subject which would so much honour investigation ; for, destined to be the wonder of all time, Niagara is yet almost entirely unknown, though the world is full of its fame. What chronicles of past ages may there not be niched in these eternal walls ? — what monuments of mighty changes sculptured on these hoary rocks ? This mountain-rent chasm is an unsealed volume of the past ! Who has the skill to divine its mystic lore — to decipher its time-traced pages ? — Let him come !

The lover of nature can here gratify his longing, and hold sweet communion with the object of his adoration ; nay, more, he will find here the temple of his divinity, and may stand beneath the very arches of its altar ! Every one who has an eye to perceive, a heart to feel, and a soul to realize the grandest exhibitions of creative energy, and the mightiest manifestations of Omnipotent power, will here find an answer to his highest aspirations, a favourable response to his desire for the spirit-kindling ecstasy of emotion.

There is however one class of people, (at least we fear there is,) those who cannot relish the vast unless it descends to the vulgar, nor enjoy the sublime, unless it stoops to the sensual — for whom

neither Heaven above, nor Niagara on earth were ever intended ; and they (if there be any such,) are especially requested to keep as far from the latter place, as they are like to be kept from the former. Nothing can be less endurable than being bored by an unmitigated blockhead, while gazing upon such sublime and thrilling scenes. It is like Paradise with a devil — *only worse !*

There are various routes by which travellers from distant parts of the country approach the Falls. The principal ones however, terminate at Buffalo, the commencement of steam-navigation on lake Erie ; or at Lewiston, (or Queenston, opposite,) the landing place of the lake Ontario, and St. Lawrence steamers. From either of these places, it is a short ride to the Falls, and there are different modes of conveyance. The traveller will of course, suit his inclination by choosing that which pleases him best.



CHAPTER II.

BUFFALO—ITS SITUATION—HARBOUR—LIGHT-HOUSE—HISTORY—BUILDINGS—HOTELS—RATHBUN—HIS ENTERPRISE—FORGERIES—IMPRISONMENT—FATE—THE EXCHANGE—THE CITY—ITS PROSPECTS—STEAM AND OTHER BOATS—GOVERNMENT WORKS—EXCURSIONS—RAIL-ROADS—CONVEYANCE TO THE FALLS.

“Queen of the Lakes, whose tributary seas
Stretch from the frozen regions of the North
To Southern climates, where the wanton breeze
O’er field and forest goes rejoicing forth : —

“Thou art the sovereign City of the Lakes,
Crowned and acknowledged — may thy fortunes be
Vast as the domain which thine empire takes,
And onward, as thy waters to the sea.”



HE several towns, villages, and other important places bordering on the Niagara strait, claim our first attention, and will be noticed in the order of succession suggested by their relative situation, beginning at the commencement of the stream, and ending with its termination at lake Ontario. This arrangement, following the course of the river, is sufficiently recommended by its simplicity, and natural harmony of parts. They form a series of links of which the strait is the connecting chain ; and starting at the lake

from which it depends, we trace it down to that which it sustains. BUFFALO is then the proper point of departure, and from that city we accordingly set forth.



BUFFALO FROM ABOVE FORT ERIE, U. C.

BUFFALO, the Queen of the Lakes, lies at the foot of Lake Erie, at the mouth of Buffalo Creek, at the effluence of the Niagara River, or Strait, and at the head of the Erie Canal. It has an excellent harbour, protected by a massy stone pier, at the extremity of which, there is a substantial stone light-house, constructed of the best

materials, and in the most durable manner—a perfect model of that kind of architecture.

It was laid out in 1801, became a military post in 1812, was burnt by the British in 1813, was incorporated as a village in 1823, and chartered as a city in 1832. It is divided into five wards, and contains about two thousand houses, and nearly twenty thousand inhabitants. Most of the buildings are good, many of them large, and quite a number uncommonly spacious and elegant.

There are thirteen churches, two large markets, a splendid theatre, a fine court-house, and several other public edifices of creditable size and architecture. The principal hotels are, the American Hotel, the Western Hotel, the Mansion House, and the United States Hotel. These are all large and well conducted, and pleasantly situate. The two first have a fine and commanding appearance, and are surmounted by noble domes, from whence extensive views are presented of the city, lake, river and surrounding country.

The MANSION HOUSE at the junction of Main and Exchange streets, and opposite to the Terrace Market, is an old-established and excellent stand, conveniently near the principal points of departure, of high reputation, and deserving a generous share of patronage. Under the management of

its present worthy and experienced proprietors, Messrs. Hall and Van Tuyl, we are confident



that it will merit and receive ample assurances of public favour.

The WESTERN HOTEL, an extensive and beautiful building, at the intersection of Pearl-street with the Terrace, is just completed, and opened under the most flattering auspices. The site of this noble hotel is very fine; and its proximity to the harbour, the canal, and the rail-roads, commends it to the patronage of business men; while its extensive accommodations, and the unsurpassed views it affords of the Lake, the Niagara River, and the

Canada shore, make it an attractive sojourn for pleasure-travellers. Its numerous advantages of



WESTERN HOTEL.

construction and position, assure its becoming immediately one of the most popular, and best sustained hotels in the country.

The AMERICAN HOTEL is one of the best and most commodious in the Union, and cost nearly one hundred thousand dollars. This hotel, the theatre, several of the churches, and a large number of other buildings, comprising many of the best in the city, were erected by BENJAMIN RATHBUN, to whom, more than to any other individual, Buffalo

is indebted for its present size, prosperity and beauty.



B. Beetham

Possessing a powerful and ambitious mind, and a vigorous, though not robust frame of body, he was enabled to conceive and carry on a scheme of improvements, as gigantic and comprehensive in its extent, as it was lamentable and unfortunate to

him in its result. The streets were filled with his men, teams, and materials; his store-houses, work-shops, and stables formed, as it were, villages of themselves; and he, a plain, frugal, unobtrusive, but active and talented man, was the "Girard of the West." Industrious, persevering, indefatigable, he had but one great fault, and that he is now expiating in the penitentiary. He trusted too implicitly in others.

The whole management and control of all the financial affairs, growing out of, and united with his extensive business and building operations, were intrusted to persons connected with him by the closest ties of blood and interest, whose integrity he could not doubt, and of whose affection he felt fully assured. By these persons a system of forgery, narrow at first, but widening rapidly as time advanced, was commenced, and continued, —solely, however, for convenience, and not from any intention to defraud, —for many months before it came to his knowledge. When it did, he made every exertion in his power to call in the fictitious paper they had issued, and in the effort to accomplish this, and when at the very point of success, he fell a victim to the rapacity and duplicity of men, who had all been benefitted, almost enriched by his exertions and improvements; and

some of whom were under personal obligations to him for many, and by no means inconsiderable, favours.

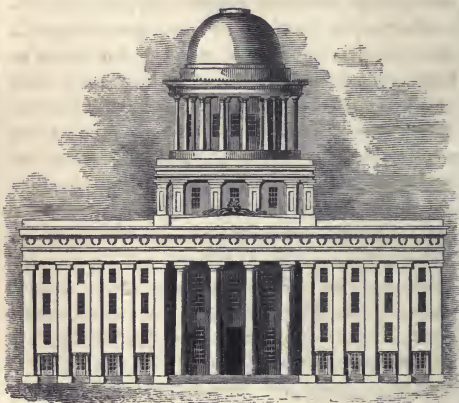
He was arrested, thrown into prison, and immured in a cell about three feet by seven, where he languished for nearly two years. His vast property was seized upon, under a deed of assignment, obtained by artifice; and thus fettered and powerless, he was left to contend against a fate, dreadful to him, but necessary to the interests of his opposers. Wealth and influence—even of his own large possessions—were arrayed against one pennyless and imprisoned, but still proof against temptation, and great even in his downfall. His unhappy destiny, aided by high talent, and urged by infamous means, could not be averted, though in spite of every art and every intrigue, it was long delayed. Indictments were procured against him for forgery, and eminent counsel engaged to support the prosecution. He was tried at Batavia, but the jury could not agree. At Buffalo he was afterwards tried and acquitted. And finally, he was again tried at Batavia, convicted, and sentenced to the state-prison for five years. Eighteen months of this term remain unexpired.

Mr. Rathbun had been for a long period so intimately and closely connected with the growth

and business of Buffalo, that no apology will be deemed necessary for this brief outline sketch of his failure and fate, nor for his portrait on a preceding page ; the more particularly, that travellers are curious to learn all they can concerning one of whom they have heard so much, but know so little, and often ask many questions about him, which do not always succeed in eliciting truth. The streets of the city are lined with proofs of his taste, genius and enterprise, and for years the history of the place could have been little else than a record of his improvements. His reputation as a landlord extended over the Union ; and the fame of his subsequent greatness and fall, had a still wider celebrity. Whatever may be the opinions of men as to the justice of his present condition, his great ability must be admitted by all, and his errors and misfortunes be remembered with regret.

Shortly before the catastrophe which put a period to his operations, Mr. Rathbun commenced a noble structure on Main-street opposite the churches ; to make room for which, a whole block of four-story brick stores had been taken down. It was to have been called the "Buffalo Exchange," would have covered the whole square, measuring two hundred and forty-five by two hundred feet, and was designed to rear its proud

and portly dome to a height of no less than two hundred and twenty-two feet. Had this building (the massive foundation of which was partly laid)



BUFFALO-EXCHANGE.

been completed, it would have been the pride of Buffalo and the West. The site is now an uncovered sepulchre of rubbish. At the Falls, too, the visitor will perceive many evidences of the talent and energy of this extraordinary man, and of the vastness of his designs, not one of which

was illusory or impracticable ;—but the consummation of these and other extensive plans of improvement was prevented by his arrest, imprisonment, and consequent failure.

Buffalo is admirably situated for a commercial place of great importance ; its growth has been rapid beyond all precedent, and it is destined to take a high rank among the great cities of the Union. It is principally built upon an elevated sandy plain ; its streets are broad, straight, and dry, and some of its noblest avenues radiate from the central point on which the Exchange was to have been erected. An air of bustle and business pervades it, especially in the summer season, by which it is likened to many a city of much older date, and of far greater pretensions. The climate is highly salubrious, the atmosphere fresh and invigorating, and it has few if any local sources of disease.

About fifty steamboats—some of them literally floating palaces—a large number of ships, brigs, schooners, and sloops, and canal boats almost innumerable, arrive at and depart from Buffalo, making regular trips, and generally freighted with produce, mérchandize and passengers to the utmost extent of their capacity and accommodations. Between this city and the village of Attica, a few

miles of rail-road, are all of a continuous and unbroken line, reaching from Boston to Buffalo, that remain unfinished, and in July next, it is intended to have even that portion completed. The ocean and the lakes will then be connected by rail-road as well as canal communication. Boston and New-York will be rivals for the rich trade of the West, and Buffalo will exact tribute from the commerce of both.

POINSETT BARRACKS, an extensive and commodious cantonment for troops, occupy a conspicuous and commanding position near the upper or northern limit of the city. Several companies of artillery are stationed there, who are paraded weekly for manouvre and review ; on which occasions, and especially on field days, citizens and strangers in considerable numbers attend, and seemingly take great interest in these martial displays. Government is also about to erect a strong fortification on the high lands, at the northwest corner of the city, for the protection of Buffalo and Black Rock, and the harbours of both, and also to secure the command of the river. A site for this fort has already been selected, and engineers are expected soon to commence operations.

Excursions from Buffalo to the Seneca Indian village, and to the ruins of old fort Erie, are

not uncommon with both citizens and strangers. They are the only places of much resort in the immediate vicinity of the place. To the former, it is a pleasant ride of three miles; to the latter, a delightful sail of about the same distance.

Buffalo is connected with the Falls, distant twenty-two miles, by a rail-road, on which the cars, propelled by steam, make two trips a day;



leaving the former place at nine in the morning, and at five o'clock in the afternoon. With the ferry at Black Rock, two miles distant, there is also rail-road communication, and the cars leave every half hour. The depot for both is on the Terrace, at its junction with Pearl-street, and fronting both the Western Hotel and the United States Hotel.

Steamboats leave the dock every morning for the Falls, and return the same day. They land passengers both at Chippewa and Schlosser, where carriages are in waiting to take them over the two or three remaining miles. Travellers can therefore choose between this mode of conveyance and the cars. Both routes are pleasant, and it may be advisable to go by one and return by the other. By adopting this plan, every part of the beautiful river and forest scenery above the falls will be seen; nor will Chippewa, Navy-Island, or Schlosser—now memorable places—be overlooked; or a splendid view from the river, of the rapids, and islands, be lost.



CHAPTER III.

PORT ERIE — SITUATION AND ARCHITECTURE — SURRENDER —
SIEGE — RUINS — WATERLOO — BLACK ROCK — RIVALRY —
GENERAL PORTER — TONAWANDA — VILLAGE AND CREEK —
CATFISH AND AGUES — SCHLOSSER LANDING — CHIPPEWA —
CREEK — BATTLE-GROUND — FORT SCHLOSSER.

“In crumbling ruins on the lake-laved shore,
Its shattered walls and bastions ivied o’er,
Stands a stern fortress that has oft withstood
The fiery brunt of battle, blushing blood,
Its curtains, parapets, and ramparts gray
War-wasted and corroding by decay.
On frowning battlement and salient stone,
Has time the unfinished work of foeman done;
And creeping plants, and blooming wild-flowers wave,
Where floated proudly once the banner brave.”



OPPOSITE to Buffalo, at the efflux of the river, and on the Canada side, stand the ruins of Fort Erie. This fortification, originally built by the French about a century ago, was a small but extremely well planned and constructed post, and must have been considered of no little importance by those who were at the trouble of its erection. All its defences were laid out and arranged in the exactest style of art; and the masonry bears witness, even at this distant date, to the solidity with which it was put together.

The curtains and other walls were grouted with a cement of water-lime, evincing the greatest care for durability, and none for expense. The bastions were all flanked with this admirable stone work, and the whole surrounded by a deep ditch, further strengthened by pointed stakes, firmly and thickly planted in the fosse, inclining outward, and rising just above the water, with which it was nearly filled. The fort was evidently designed by an able engineer, and might have been regarded as a miniature model of military architecture. Every avenue of approach, was enfiladed or exposed to a cross fire, and nothing seems to have been omitted that could contribute to the annoyance of a besieging foe, or the protection of its little garrison. By the Indians, it must have been deemed impregnable.

Fort Erie was, during the late war, the scene of some of the most memorable exploits of the Republican army. It was surrendered on the third of July, at the first summons, to General Brown who, with a force of five thousand men, invaded Canada in 1814, by Major Buck, the officer in command; and the British garrison, consisting of one hundred and thirty-seven men of the Eighth, or King's Regiment, became prisoners of war. The troops under General Brown, after

advancing upon Fort George, and fighting the celebrated battles of Chippewa and Niagara, fell back upon this point, and sustained a siege, remarkable for the gallantry with which it was pressed and repelled. Subsequently, the British forces having retired to winter quarters, the fort was abandoned and demolished, the campaign ended, and the American army having gained nothing but glory by the invasion, returned to their own country.



RUINS OF FORT ERIE, U. C.

The fortification is now entirely in ruins, deserted and desolate ; but its ancient defences may still be traced out, and the little hillocks that dot the plain below, each marking a soldier's grave, attest the obstinacy with which the attack was urged, and the assault repulsed.

WATERLOO is a pleasant little village on the bank of the river a mile and a half below Fort

Erie, and opposite to Black Rock, with which it is connected by the ferry. It has probably sixty or seventy houses, and four or five hundred inhabitants. From this place to the Falls, the road runs along the bank of the river, and the scenery is extremely picturesque. Horses and carriages may be had for excursions to Fort Erie or the Falls, on livery, at reasonable rates.

The village of **BLACK ROCK** on the American side of the strait, and two miles below Buffalo, comprises some two hundred houses, and contains about two thousand inhabitants. It is composed of two divisions or hamlets, separated by the distance of one mile. The lower village is therefore three miles from Buffalo, and is commonly called "The Dam," from its vicinity to a structure of that kind, erected to raise the water for the benefit of the harbour and canal. The pier is two miles long, and commencing at Squaw Island, terminates at a small island or reef called Bird Island, opposite Buffalo. By means of the pier and dam, the water in the harbour is raised several feet above the river, thus creating water-power to an extent almost unlimited. There are a number of fine mills in constant operation.

Black Rock was formerly the rival of Buffalo, and maintained for several years a sort of doubtful

ascendancy. In those days, the harbour at Black Rock was thought by many people to be far superior to that of its competitor ; and large appropriations were obtained for it, almost before any attempts were made at improving the port of Buffalo. But the current of the river, and the dangers of the channel from large sunken rocks, difficulties that could not be entirely overcome, gave its rival a decided advantage, and prevented its becoming a place of much business. It is



however, destined to no inconsiderable importance as a manufacturing town. It was founded about the same time with Buffalo, and was burnt by the enemy in 1813. The principal ferry over the river is at the upper village, and is connected with Buffalo by rail-road. The Niagara Falls Rail-Road runs through both divisions of the place.

General Porter was, until quite recently, the principal land-holder at Black Rock, and for many years resided at the upper village, where he had a splendid mansion, which is now occupied by Lewis F. Allen, Esq. a gentleman favourably known for his agricultural enterprise and writings. General Porter has removed to the Falls, where he has large possessions, and a princely dwelling.

The village of TONAWANDA is nine miles below Black Rock, and lies on both sides of the creek of the same name, at its confluence with the strait. At this place, the Erie Canal, leaving the river, enters the creek, which it follows to Pendleton, twelve miles distant. Tonawanda is a pleasant thriving village, and contains about twelve hundred inhabitants. WHITE-HAVEN, mills and hamlet, occupying the site of the proposed Jewish city of Arrarat, founded by the *soi disant* Grand High Priest, M. M. Noah, then a Judge of Israel, but now a judge of the Court of Sessions, New-York, is on Grand-Island, directly opposite.

Tonawanda, the aboriginal name of the creek, is an Indian word, signifying "*swift running water.*" There was doubtless a touch of native irony in this appellation, for the creek is a deep *sluggish* stream. It has been dammed over for the benefit of the canal, by which a beautiful cascade

is formed. It is about eighty yards in width, is crossed by a long wooden bridge, on which the rail-road passes, and is the boundary between the counties of Erie and Niagara. The place is somewhat celebrated for its cat-fish and agues, both of which are said to be caught here in great abundance. We are by no means satisfied that this dignity is quite deserved; if true, however, it enjoys a monopoly of the honour and profit.

SCHLOSSER LANDING is nine miles below Tonawanda, and two miles above the Falls. An old



SCHLOSSER LANDING.

store-house, and tavern are the only buildings at this point. It is the landing place for steam-boats from Buffalo, and visitors to the Falls are conveyed thence in carriages. This place is celebrated as being the spot where the Caroline lay at the

time of her destruction. Navy-Island is opposite, and Grand-Island, the Canada Shore, Chippewa, the head of the rapids, and Iris-Island are all within view. The rail-road runs along the river but few rods from the shore.

CHIPPEWA lies on the bank of the river, at the mouth of Chippewa Creek, two and a half miles above the Falls. With the single exception of Waterloo, it is the only village on the Canada side above the cataract. It is a flourishing place—a port of entry—and has a very tolerable harbour. The stream is spanned by a wooden draw-bridge one hundred yards long, and is navigable about twenty miles up, for vessels of two or three hundred tons burthen. Steam-boats from Buffalo land here, and the journey to the Falls is continued in carriages, which are in waiting. The population of the village is estimated at two thousand persons. The view of the rapids, and scenery above the Falls, is very fine. The battle-ground is two miles above, on the Buffalo road.

Chippewa is the lowest point to which the upper portion of the Niagara strait is navigable. From Queenston to this place, goods are carried by land, and the road has from the old French times, been called the Portage. The two villages are now connected by a rail-road, but recently

completed. It was at Chippewa that the troops and munitions of war were collected to oppose the Navy-Island patriots; and here the expedition against the Caroline was fitted out and despatched, which resulted in the death of Durfee, and the destruction of that vessel.

The only streams of any considerable size that flow into the Niagara river, are the Tonawanda and Chippewa creeks. Of the former we have before spoken, and to the latter, no particular interest attaches. It is about twenty rods wide at its mouth, and forty or fifty miles in length. About ten miles of the Welland Canal, which affords a water communication, navigable for vessels of one hundred and fifty tons burthen, between the Lakes Erie and Ontario, are formed by this stream. No small portion of the rich western trade, finds its way to the North and East, through this canal, in the construction of which, the people of Canada have shown a spirit of enterprise, that is like to be well rewarded, and may eventually lead to other important works of internal improvement.

FORT SCHLOSSER, or rather its remains, now scarcely to be distinguished, is a mile below the Landing, on the American side. It was a mere stoccade, built in the old French war, upon lines slightly raised above the river banks. The site of

the fort is on a gentle elevation, between the road and the river, in a cultivated field, where the plough and the harrow have done their work so well, that hardly a trace of this once noted military post is now to be discovered.

Another mile and we are at the village of Niagara Falls, with a bounding pulse, the roar of the cataract in our ears, and a feverish impatience in our breasts.







CHAPTER IV.

VILLAGE OF NIAGARA FALLS—EAGLE HOTEL—MR. HOOKER AND SONS—CATARACT HOTEL—GEN. WHITNEY—NIAGARA FALLS HOTEL—RATHBUN'S ENTERPRISE—CITY OF THE FALLS—CLIFTON—CLIFTON HOUSE—COL. CHRYSLER—PAVILION HOTEL—CAMERA OBSCURA—MUSEUM—ETC.

"High-seated on the crests of cliffs sublime,
Like eaglets on the mountain tops of time,
In unawakened energy repose
Cities in embryo—between which flows,
Down the dread cataract, and through the chasm,
With ever-angry rush and many a spasm,
A mighty torrent—ocean-like in size,
Whose mists and thunders mingle with the skies,
Bounded by frowning walls that shake with dread
At each vibration of its earthquake tread!"



THE village of Niagara Falls, lies just above, and adjacent to, the Cataract, on the American side. It was laid out in 1805 by Judge Porter, who is principal proprietor of the place, and of the Islands at and near the precipice. He has a fine mansion house in which he has resided for many years. His brother, General Porter, has also a large estate at the Falls, and a splendid house, in which he lives. Grand Niagara, was the name originally given to the place, which was subsequently changed to Manchester ;

but some inconvenience having attended this appellation, it has long been disused, and that of Niagara Falls substituted. The village contains two churches, two large hotels, several other public houses, two schools, eighty-five dwellings, and about six hundred inhabitants. Sharing the fate of other places on the frontier, it was burnt by the British in 1813.



EAGLE HOTEL.

The EAGLE HOTEL, a few steps from the Buffalo and Niagara Falls rail-road, is a fine large building, fronting on Main-street, one hundred and twenty-five feet, and seventy feet deep. It was formerly of wood, but its dimensions having been found much too small, the brick part was

added by Mr. Rathbun, in 1835. This portion is substantially built, and is four stories high. The wooden part was well and tastefully constructed, and has magnificent colonnades on the front and south sides. The rooms are numerous, large, well ventilated, and convenient; and are admirably arranged, and elegantly furnished. The proprietor, Mr. C. B. Griffin, is a gentleman well known to the travelling public, as a most worthy, efficient, and obliging landlord. Visitors will find his table, wines, liquors, and attendance all that can be desired, and his charges reasonable. Connected with this hotel, which has ample accommodations for one hundred persons, there is a beautiful garden, well laid out with gravelled walks, and containing a great variety of shrubs, plants, flowers, and fruit-trees—a most agreeable and pleasant place of resort, which should not be neglected. Of cherries, there are, in their season, great abundance, which are particularly recommended. There is in the same building, a small shop for the sale of canes, confections, Indian curiosities, and mineral specimens; and a fine billiard room just below.

Mr. S. HOOKER, guide to the Falls, has his office and residence next, south of the Eagle Hotel; and to all, who may desire such attendance,

offers his valuable services. Mr. H. and his two sons, are the only guides to the Falls who have made this their regular profession, and they deserve notice and patronage. He is, in spite of



MR. S. HOOKER.

his name, an upright, intelligent, and worthy man, who has resided at the Falls for twenty-six years, and has a perfect acquaintance with every point of interest, and every event worth relating. His

sons, born and bred in the very roar and spray of the cataract, and familiar with that and the surrounding scenery from childhood, are in every respect quite competent to the creditable discharge of their duties to strangers who may engage their assistance.



CATARACT HOTEL.

The CATARACT HOTEL is a few yards further south, and near the Lockport and Lewiston railroad depot. It fronts on Main-street one hundred and fifty feet, and is ninety feet in depth. It is three and four stories high, and the southern part has colonnades or piazzas on front and rear. The internal arrangements of this hotel, combine every advantage of quiet, comfort, and convenience; and the rooms, among which are two

extensive dining halls, are tastefully and even richly furnished. It stands but few feet from the bank of the river, and the rapids roll and foam along almost beneath its balconies. Bathing apartments are connected with it; and recently improved by large additions, it has now accommodations for nearly two hundred permanent guests. Viands that delight both the eye and palate, liquors and wines, pure in quality and mellowed by age, and servants ready without impertinence, and prompt without bribery, are advantages that render it a most agreeable place of entertainment.

This Hotel is kept by General Whitney and sons, who are too well and favourably known to need any recommendation. General Whitney was one of the earliest settlers at the Falls, and has given so many proofs of his enterprise and public spirit, that his name belongs to the history of the place. He established the ferry, and built the first stair-case down the bank. The first bridge to Iris Island, and the Terrapin bridge were also constructed by him; and many other conveniences about the falls, owe to him their origin or suggestion. He has kept a public house there for many years, and princes, dukes, marquises, counts, and lords, have been his patrons, in addition to gentry of every other degree in life.

But he is still a staunch republican, and a true patriot; frank, hearty, and familiar in his manners, plain in appearance, and upright in all his transactions.

Opposite to the Cataract Hotel, are the rooms of Mr. Hulett, who deserves especial mention. A circulating library, reading room, a splendid and valuable collection of indigenous and foreign minerals, curiosities of various kinds, and ices, confections, and other refreshments, bear ample witness to the justice of his claim upon the patronage of the public. The Exchange Hotel, a commodious and pleasant, though not large house of entertainment, is next adjoining; and the Post Office is but a short distance below, on the same side of the street.

Adjacent to the Eagle Hotel, on the north side, is the first, or basement story of a building, which the traveller will hardly need be informed, was projected and commenced by the celebrated Benjamin Rathbun. Its vast size, solidity of structure, and excellence of location, at once show its pater-nity. His cool judgment perceived at a glance, the pecuniary advantage that must result from the possession of a hotel sufficiently large and magnificent to attract and accommodate all the principal visitors to the Falls, of whom so many

thousands annually arrive ; and he at once set about its construction. Perhaps, also, he wished to erect a hotel worthy of the place ; for in every person of real genius, there is a tinge of romantic enthusiasm. The spot selected for it was the very best that could be chosen. The cars from Buffalo would stop at one front, and those from Lockport and Lewiston at the other ; and it was but a few rods from the cataract itself. It was to have been called the Niagara Falls Hotel — was to



NIAGARA FALLS HOTEL.

front one hundred and seventy feet on Main-street, one hundred and ninety feet on Fall-street, to be, to the top of the dome, one hundred and twenty-five feet high, and was to have ample accommodations for above six hundred persons. Had this

hotel been finished, it could not fail to have been one of the best and most profitable pieces of property in the Union ; but it was destined that his career of improvement should stop in its midland course, and most unfortunately for the village of Niagara Falls, it did so.

The prescient genius and active enterprise of Rathbun, stimulated and inspired by the grandeur of those incomparable cascades, and the glorious scenery around, would have reared a city there in a few years time, that would rival the creeping aggregations of a century, and that too, by merely developing the wonderful resources of the place. It would have been no hot-bed growth, but a natural and vigorous shooting up from a rich and unhacknied soil. Look at the stone-faced aqueduct or race, canal-like in size and capacity, which he built, and was preparing to line with mills and manufactories. There is no end to the water-power that might be brought into use here, or he would soon have found it. Could the steam-mills and factories of other places compete with those driven by this all-powerful, obedient, and ready-formed agent of nature, which requires no care, and is subject to no expense ? But Rathbun, the soul of laudable enterprise, is, for faults not his own, (as many believe,) now in the penitentiary,

and Niagara Falls must bide her time. There was a country once, where, if a man exhibited more talent, or possessed more wealth than his neighbours, they took off his head for the sake of equality ; but now, and here every one can tolerate a superior.

The village of Niagara Falls has also two saw-mills, a grist-mill, a paper-mill, a woolen-factory, two machine shops, a rail-road-car manufactory, and shops for almost every variety of the mechanic arts. These are all excellent in their kind, and the paper-mill particularly so, as the material upon which this book is printed, abundantly demonstrates. There is also a Bowling Alley, where visitors can mingle exercise with amusement ; and a Public Garden laid out in good taste, containing a variety of flowers and shrubbery, and a place for the exhibition of fire-works, which are frequently displayed on proper and public occasions. The streets are broad and regular, but unpaved, and therefore damp and disagreeable after heavy rains ; but as the soil is of a sandy kind, a short interval generally suffices to render them dry and pleasant.

No place on the broad platform of God's footstool can be more healthy and inviting than this, and it is a most desirable location for a permanent

or summer residence. Fine groves of the native forest trees are scattered about ; and the Islands, on which not a stick is allowed to be cut, afford the most delightful retreats that can be imagined or wished. Nature seems to have bestowed every advantage and every attraction upon the vicinity of her master-work, as if to allure mankind to a contemplation of her beauty and power.

On the Canada side are the City of the Falls, and village of Clifton. The Pavilion Hotel, a new and elegant edifice, erected on the site of the hotel of the same name, which was burnt down two years since, is in the former ; and the Clifton House in the latter. The road leading up from the river at the ferry, divides the two places.

The CLIFTON HOUSE, a large, elegant, commodious, well-finished, and well-furnished hotel, stands on the brow of the bank, near the ferry, and commands a splendid view of the Falls, in which all their majesty and glory are revealed. It is a noble structure, with triple colonnades of ample length and area, and an interior that leaves nothing to be regretted. Mr. Chrysler, a "fine old English gentleman," and a veteran host, is proprietor and landlord of this superb establishment, which is conducted, under his personal superintendence, in a manner that speaks for itself, and

needs no eulogy. Are you fond of hunting? — he keeps a pack of hounds and has a passion for the



CLIFTON HOUSE.

chase. You could not wish for a better sportsman or a more jovial companion, and cannot fail to like him in either capacity, — as host or hunter.

The PAVILION HOTEL occupies a very elevated and conspicuous position on the upper bank, overlooking Table-rock, and the Horse-shoe fall. It is an extensive and well-planned building, and is kept by Mr. Moxley, whose name is a sufficient guaranty that his patrons will have no cause to complain of their choice of quarters.

The CAMERA OBSCURA, midway between the Clifton House and Table-rock, should be remembered; — it is well worth a visit: — most interesting and life-like miniature views of the Falls are shown by that optical instrument.

The MUSEUM of Mr. Barnett, is a short distance above. This gentleman has prepared and collected a very great variety of valuable and rare specimens in natural history, and has, after devoting years to this object, succeeded in bringing his museum to a high degree of perfection. It is admirably arranged, contains almost innumerable unique and curious articles, both native and foreign, and would do credit to any place.

A large white building, with colonnades in front, about one fourth of a mile above the Falls, formerly kept as a hotel, when it was called the Ontario House, is now occupied as barracks by the Sixty-Seventh Regiment of Infantry, which is stationed here, under the immediate command of Major Brooke. The troops are paraded for review once a week, on which occasions the showy uniform and high military discipline of this veteran corps, manouvering to the excellent music of its fine regimental band, present a scene of combined attractions that few care to neglect. The band is often allowed, and especially on clear moonlit

evenings, to assemble on the bank of the river near the cataract, and blend the inspiring tones of their martial harmonies with the grand diapason of Niagara's thunder-breathed hymn. The effect is indescribable, and visitors gather round and listen with an interest seldom if ever so deeply awakened in their bosoms, — but when before did they hear a human accompaniment to the sublime anthems of Nature !

The City of the Falls, and Clifton are both as yet small places, and have probably an aggregate population of three hundred souls. Our remarks upon the salubrity of Niagara Falls village, and its desirability for permanent and summer residences, apply, with equal force to these places. In fact the whole vicinity of the cataract on both sides of the river is pleasant and healthful in the highest degree, and must in a few years attract men of wealth and standing to become its constant or occasional inhabitants.



CHAPTER V.

MOUNTAIN PLAIN—LEWISTON—QUEENSTON—YOUNGSTOWN
NIAGARA VILLAGE—FORT GEORGE—FORT MASSASAUGA—
FORT NIAGARA—TRADITIONS—INDIAN INCURSIONS—SUR-
PRISAL—ABDUCTION AND MURDER OF MORGAN—REPAIRS—
ADDITIONS AND ARMAMENT.

“ Here ends the plain—opposing heights look down
On river, valley, forest, lake and town:—
Bright river glancing on in silver sheen,
Through valley mantled o’er with emerald green;
Forest, in whose embowered and sylvan shade,
The Indian hunter wooed the dark-haired maid,
Near the fair lake on which his light canoe,
O’er foam-crowned waves in arrowy swiftmess flew,
Ere from afar the invading pale-face came,
And hardly left the red-man grave or name.”



ABOUT seven miles below the falls, the elevated plain, through which the cataract has been for scores of ages cutting and tearing its hard-won way, and having as yet accomplished but one fourth of its appointed task, suddenly terminates, and looks down from a height of nearly four hundred feet upon the villages below, the winding stream, the smiling vale, the rival forts, the dark forests, and the lovely lake. Then, leaving the river, it stretches away to the right to Lockport, where, through a deep artificial chasm,

and a magnificent pile of masonry, forming a double range of locks, the Erie Canal descends the mountain ridge by slow and measured, though Titanic steps ; and onward still to the Genesee river, whose shrunken waters, as if afraid to take the fearful leap at which Niagara thrills and maddens, plunge down successive ledges and hide in the lake below ; and thence still on and on till the rock-piled plain is lost in the sublime ranges of the Alleghany mountains. The same great plain or ridge passing off to the left, loses itself at last in the distant hills and valleys of the west.

Under the quiet shelter of these great heights — the mountains of Father Hennepin — and on opposite sides of the river, which seems now to smile and gladden at its escape from the dark rock-bound channel, through which it writhed and struggled like a wounded snake, repose the peaceful villages of Lewiston and Queenston, shaking hands across the deep water like twin brothers, by the ferry that connects them. These are the landing places of the Ontario and St. Lawrence steamers ; and this the highest point of river navigation below the cataract of Niagara. Both villages are connected with the Falls by rail-road.

LEWISTON presents the pleasing and lovely appearance which characterises so many American

villages, and is the subject of such common remark by native and foreign tourists. An air of subdued softness and religious-like repose seems to hover upon and hallow them all. The village was named in honour of Governor Lewis, in 1805, and was destroyed by the British forces in



LEWISTON LANDING.

1813. At the close of the war it was rebuilt, and has since gradually increased to its present size ; but its growth has been extremely languid, and it numbers only about eighty dwellings, and six or seven hundred inhabitants. It is however a pretty and flourishing place, and has a fine academy, one or two churches, and a very excellent hotel, called

the **FRONTIER HOUSE**. The site of Fort Green, and the Five-mile Meadows, interesting from their connection with reminiscences of border strife, are both near the village, and within the township of Lewiston.

QUEENSTON, opposite, is a small quaint-looking and irregular village. It contains forty or fifty dwellings, two taverns, and about four hundred inhabitants. The mountain ridge portage commenced here, and terminated at Chippewa. The two places are now connected, as before observed, by a rail-road, via the Falls.

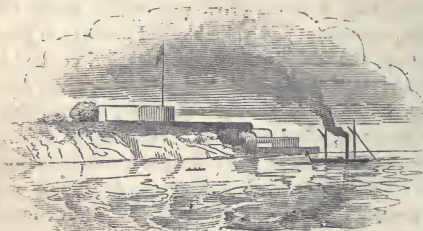
Thirteen miles from the Falls, and six from Lewiston, on the American shore, stands the village of Youngstown, a pleasantly situated, quiet little place, remarkable for nothing but its vicinity to the forts George and Niagara ; and for having been the first village burnt by the enemy, in retaliation for the destruction of Newark. It has about forty houses, and perhaps three hundred inhabitants.

On the opposite bank of the stream, the town of Niagara, — formerly Newark, and erst Ontario — and Fort George are situate. Niagara is the oldest, and, if we except Buffalo, the largest place on the river. It contains many fine dwellings, and has a population of about three thousand

persons. Ship building is carried on here to some extent, and there is a chartered Dry Dock Company, with banking privileges, whose works are both important and valuable. Formerly, a good deal of the commerce of the interior, centred in this place, but the principal trade has since been diverted to Hamilton and other more enterprising, or better situated villages. Newark, as it was then called, was burnt by the retreating American forces under General McClure; in 1813, and was revenged immediately after, by the destruction of every settlement on the United States' Niagara frontier. FORT GEORGE, an earth-built fortress, lies just above the village. It was considered of consequence as a military post during the war, and following the fluctuations of the contest, was alternately in the possession of both belligerent armies. It is now deserted and dismantled, and is fast crumbling to ruins.

FORT MASSASAUGA stands on the extreme point of the peninsula, at the junction of the river Niagara with Lake Ontario; and is one and a half miles below Fort George, on the same side of the Strait. It is constructed of earth, with a large stone block house of a septagonal form, in the centre, which at present mounts a single cannon of twenty-four lbs. calibre. This fort is manned

and garrisoned, is kept in good repair, and is said to be a very strong post.



FORT MASSASAUGA.

FORT NIAGARA on the American shore, occupies a similar position, and its defences are washed by the river on one side, and by the lake on the other. The French, English, and American flags have successively floated over its ramparts, and it has probably experienced a greater variety of fortunes, and been a silent witness of more striking and diversified events, than any other place in North America, unless perhaps, Quebec. It was originally settled in 1678 by a French officer, M. de La Salle, who obtained permission of the Indians to build a store-house, seduced them to join in a hunt, and in their absence, erected a fortress. On their return, they were enraged at the

deception, but he found means to soften their anger while he strengthened his position, and ultimately to pacify their resentment. From this point the savages were thence accustomed to sally



FORT NIAGARA.

forth upon the English settlements, and hither they returned after completing the work of slaughter and spoliation, to receive the wages of murder and robbery.

In 1725 the most ancient of the present buildings were erected, and massive piles of masonry attest the importance which the French attached to the place. There are many traditions concerning the early history of the fort, some of which point to crimes of the blackest character, and acts of the most brutal ferocity. If true, they should

be suffered to sleep in oblivion — if false, it were idle to repeat them. At this distance of time, the true could not be distinguished from the false, nor the false be divested of probability. It was an age of excesses and venality, of oppression and endurance. The despotism in which these revolting outrages were born, — if indeed they had being, has passed away ; let the memory of the errors and offences it produced, share its tomb.

Sir William Johnson obtained possession of the fort in 1759, it is said, by fraud ; but the treachery has never been proved. In that year, the magazine was built, and other defences erected. During the revolutionary war, it became again the scene of savage preparation and of savage joy. Here the murdering bands of Brandt, Butler, and Johnson, equipped and painted themselves for the work of butchery and blood, and set out on their inhuman expeditions against the American settlements. The massacres of Cherry-Valley and Wyoming tell the story of their success and barbarity ; the archives of England could perhaps relate their reward. Fort Niagara was the witness of their pow-wows and scalp-dances ; probably of their tortures and sacrifices. Here they were incited to make incursions against the defenceless, to kill, burn, and destroy ; and here they found shelter

and protection from the anger of the indignant, and the vengeance of the injured. When there were none to oppose, they set off to assassinate ; and when they were pressed by the foe, they sneaked back to be defended. Malignant, but not manly — vindictive, but not open — cruel, but not bold, their alliance added nothing to the glory of British arms, while their acknowledged employment fastened an eternal stigma upon the British name. But in spite of all the arts, arms, and alliances of England, America achieved her independence, and in 1796 fort Niagara was given up to the United States, never again to be the scene of such unhallowed festivities, and demoniac triumphs, as disgraced it under the lily and lion banners of its former occupants. During the late war it was surprised by the British, through the treachery, as supposed, of the American commander, Capt. Leonard, and a part of the garrison put to the sword. It remained in their possession until the peace of 1815, when it was again surrendered to the United States.

It has since been the scene of an outrage, as strange as it was base ; and as impolitic as it was atrocious. An American citizen, by the name of William Morgan, for disclosing the secrets of the Society of Free Masons, was seized upon a false

pretext, hurried into a carriage, bound, blindfolded, and gagged, and conveyed post to Fort Niagara, in the magazine of which he was immured for several days, and then murdered ! The manner of his death remains a mystery ; but the general belief is, that he was taken out in the night, and thrown, loaded with weights, into the river. The perpetrators of this detestable crime were never discovered, though every exertion was made to bring them to justice. The outrage defeated its object, and thus in some measure avenged itself.

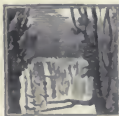
Recent events on the frontier, and the critical state of our foreign relations, have called the attention of Government to the importance of Fort Niagara as a military post, and large appropriations have been expended under the direction of able engineers, in strengthening its defences, and adding to their number. These are now nearly completed ; its garrison and part of its armament have already arrived, and in the event of another war, it will be found no easy matter to reduce it either by siege or assault. But we trust long years may elapse, before a resort to arms shall again become necessary.



CHAPTER VI.

NIAGARA STRAIT—BREADTH—DEPTH—RAPIDS—GENERAL
APPEARANCE—NAVIGATION—STEAMBOATS—FULTON—IS-
LANDS—GRAND ISLAND—BOSTON TIMBER-COMPANY—VIL-
LAGE—MILLS—VESSELS DESTROYED—BUCK-HORN ISLAND
NAVY ISLAND—MILITARY OCCUPATION.

“The sails of commerce whiten o’er the seas,
And wing their way when favoured by the breeze ;
But when opposing tides and tempests rise,
The yielding barque the unequal contest flies,
And fate-ward driven is wrecked upon the shore,
Or forced to shun the track she sought before.
Not so with thy creations, Lord of steam !
They breast the raging storm, ascend the stream —
Contending currents and advancing gales,
But show thy triumph over seas and sails.”



HAVING briefly noticed the principal places on the Niagara frontier, a short account of the river itself, its islands, currents, etc. is further necessary to our purpose of giving the reader the information he must necessarily desire to obtain, of every thing immediately connected with the Falls. Every portion of this strait, from its intimate relation to the wonderful cataract, which yearly attracts such vast numbers of people from even the remote parts of the earth, and which is in itself so immeasurably superior in its

sublimity and grandeur to every natural work of the material universe, of which we have any knowledge, must possess a degree of interest to the traveller which we have no right, if even we had the inclination, to overlook.

The Niagara river or strait, is about two miles wide at its efflux, opposite Buffalo. At Black Rock, it is nearly a mile in breadth, and is here deep and rapid, having a current of six or eight miles an hour. Below this point, its breadth is variable, and it expands and contracts several times before reaching Grand Island, at the head of which it is again two miles wide. It here divides — a branch of from one fourth of a mile to a mile broad, passing round either side of the island. The whole width of the river measuring across the centre of Grand Island, is more than eight miles.

Below Grand Island, and opposite to Schlosser, it is nearly three miles across, and has the appearance of a beautiful glassy lake, such as one might fancy in an Italian landscape. Lower down, it narrows to less than a mile, and soon after spreads again to a mile and a half. At the Falls, it is about three fourth of a mile wide ; a short distance below, it is contracted to fifty-six rods, and at the Whirlpool, is but a stone's throw, or one

hundred and fifty yards across. This is the narrowest part of the strait.

Its depth is also very unequal, measuring in some places not over fifteen or twenty, and in others nearly three hundred feet. For this great inequality, it is extremely difficult, if not altogether impossible, satisfactorily to account. As may be supposed, from these striking irregularities in the breadth and depth of the stream, the velocity of the current is also very variable, averaging from four to five miles an hour to the commencement of the rapids, where it is greatly increased.

At this point, the bed of the river declines, the channel contracts, numerous large rocks heave up the rolling surges, and dispute the passage of the now raging and foaming floods. The mighty torrent leaping down successive ledges, dashing over opposing elevations, hurled back by ridges, and repelled from shores and islands, plunging, boiling, roaring, seems a mad wilderness of waters, striving against its better fate, and hurried on to destruction by its own blind and reckless impetuosity. Were there no cataract, these rapids would yet make Niagara the wonder of the world.

Most rivers proper, are subject to great changes in the quantity of water which is carried down at different seasons, sometimes overflowing their

banks, and inundating the flat country through which they pass; and at other periods being comparatively low and diminutive. Such is not the case with the Niagara strait. It constantly presents the same uniform appearance, and is at all times a deep, powerful, rapid, majestic stream, pouring its ceaseless floods forever on to the mighty cataract, over which they dash; and scarcely affected by the snows of winter, the heat of summer, the rain, the drought, the calm, or the storm. This peculiarity, is of course owing to the great superficial extent of the lake in which it has its origin, and of the vast seas and rivers above, from which its supplies are drawn. The close observer would however soon perceive, that, operated upon by local causes, it rises and falls occasionally, though not to an extent sufficient to alter its general aspect.

Before the application of steam power to maritime purposes, the navigation of the Niagara river must have been attended with many and almost insuperable difficulties. The velocity of the current, the occasional great depth of the channel, the lake winds, blowing almost constantly down the stream, and the breadth of the strait, making it troublesome to cross, must have rendered the upward progress of batteaux, barges, or other

vessels of any considerable size, whether propelled by setting poles, oars, or warping, a work of immense toil and protracted exertion. But since the introduction of steamboats, so admirably adapted to river-navigation, and able alike to breast the strongest currents, and make head against opposing tempests, the passage of the strait from the lowest practicable point to the lake above, is easily made in from two to three hours; and thus, that which was formerly the labour of days, is reduced to the recreation—for a steam voyage up the Niagara cannot be otherwise than delightful—of a mere play-spell.

The genius of Fulton has chained the elements, taken captive the storm, and subdued the flood. It has joined remote distances, united seas, and made almost impassable rivers the great highways of Nations. It has done more!—The missionary of art, science, and civilization, his wonderful invention has, with a rapidity that sets time and space alike at defiance, carried to far-off places, and almost unapproachable seclusions, a knowledge of the most important truths and sublime discoveries. By the mute teaching of its power, and its complete subservience to the wants, wishes, and caprices of man, it has given birth to a spirit of energy, enterprise, and emulation,

which, far from the least beneficial of its results, has changed the face of nature, and exalted the destiny of the human race.

Immortal Fulton ! how much is the happiness of individuals, the welfare of nations, and even the interests of religion indebted to thy persevering and far-reaching genius. What does not the world owe to a mind that could originate, and a zeal that could conduct — and that too, in spite of prejudices and obstacles that would have tried the patience of a saint, and exhausted the firmness of a martyr — to a successful and triumphant issue, the establishment of such an astonishing and inestimable agency of good ! Greece or Rome would have given to Fulton a place among the Gods, and erected pillars, statues, arches, temples, and altars to his honour. America has done better ! She has called her villages, towns, and counties by his name, and covered her seas, lakes, and rivers with moving monuments to his memory ; while every pharos that lights her busy ports, shines upon the pulsing proofs of his fame and genius.

There are about forty islands in the Niagara strait, above the cataract. Most of them are small, insignificant, and scarcely worthy of enumeration. Of those immediately at the Falls, we

shall have occasion to speak in another place. Saving these, Grand and Navy Islands are the only two to which any peculiar interest is attached.

Grand Island is about twelve miles long and six broad; its upper extremity is about seven miles from the lake, its lowest point three miles above the Falls. It contains over seventeen thousand acres of excellent land, heavily timbered, and plentifully stocked with game. It is a favourite resort for Indian hunters, and sportsmen from Buffalo and other places. This Island, with most others in the strait, belongs to the United States, the main channel of the river being on the west or Canada side. The vanity and folly of an ambitious Israelite, first gave it notoriety, — it has since attained a celebrity of a different kind.

In 1833, the Boston Timber Company purchased the major part of Grand Island of the State of New-York, and commenced the erection of large mills for the purpose of supplying the eastern market with shipping timber ready fitted for use, the fine forests of towering oaks and firs on the island furnishing abundant material of the best kind, and of easy access. These mills cover an area of one hundred and fifty feet square. They are (or rather were, for their operations are at present suspended) driven by steam, contain

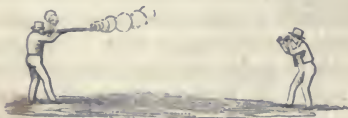
fifteen separate gangs or sets of saws, and cut logs from ten to seventy feet in length. Connected with these mills, there is a large steam flouring-mill, and a small, but pleasant little village, called White-Haven, from the name of the principal proprietor. The village is directly opposite Tonawanda, on the site of the never-built city of Arrarat, and the mills are a short distance below. They are well worth a visit, which is easily made, as the steamboats that ply between Buffalo and the Falls, usually land there to procure the necessary article of fuel.

In 1759, upon the conquest of the Canadas by the English, two large French vessels were burnt at the lower end of Grand Island, to prevent them falling into the hands of the enemy. Parts of their charred remains are said to be still visible, and not long since, several tons of iron were recovered from the river, by raking its bed at the point where they were destroyed, which portion of the stream, is, from that circumstance, called Burnt-Ship Bay, and is included between Grand and the north west extremity of Buck-horn Islands. This latter, is long, low, and marshy, and contains one hundred and forty-six acres. It is unimportant in any respect.

NAVY ISLAND, belonging to the British dominions,

lies near the foot of Grand Island, between that and the Canada shore : — the principal channel of the strait is between these two islands. It is a mile long, half a mile wide, and contains three hundred and four acres of land. The soil is rich, and covered with a heavy growth of timber. It derives its name from having been a French naval depot, where the two vessels mentioned above, and other smaller ones were constructed.

This island has become celebrated in consequence of having been occupied by McKenzie, Van Rensselaer, Sutherland, and others, refugees and 'sublime' patriots, as a military station, during the border excitement of 1837 and '38, an account of which, and of the destruction of the *Caroline* is reserved for a subsequent page.



CHAPTER VII.

NIAGARA RIVER — COURSE AND VELOCITY — LOVELINESS — DIVISIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS — HEIGHT OF BANKS — DEPTH — BREADTH — DESCENT OF THE STREAM — RETROCESSION OF THE FALLS — CONCLUDING REMARKS.

“Majestic stream! what river rivals thee,
Thou child of many lakes and sire of one —
Lakes that claim kindred with the all-circling sea —
Large at thy birth as when thy race is run!
Against what great obstructions hast thou won
Thine august way — the rock-formed mountain-plain
Has opened at thy bidding, and the steep
Bars not thy passage, for the ledge in vain
Stretches across the channel, — thou dost leap
Sublimely down the height, and urge again
Thy rock-embattled course on to the distant main.”



NIAGARA river is, in its whole course, quite in keeping with the stupendous cataract from which its principal interest is derived. There is nothing insignificant, nothing paltry, nothing common-place about it, from the lake in which its vast floods have birth, to that which they supply. It is every where grand, mighty, and majestic. When spread to the dimensions of a little sea, it has no resemblance to a shoal; and when contracted to the breadth of a creek, it seems to possess the power of an ocean. The

very interruptions it meets with in its way, seem placed there only to exhibit the immensity of its force. The basin which receives its prodigious far-falling volume, resembles an abyss without bounds to its capacity ; and the compressed channel through which it then flows, seems to have opened its rock-bound banks to an imprisoned sea, that would have burst a passage, had escape been denied.

Making a sharp angle at the Falls, it rolls on through beautiful curves, in an almost straight direction for about two miles ; then winds gracefully off to the left, and passing through a succession of noble bends, rushes, wild, impetuous and uncontrollable, into the Whirlpool, where, like a baffled Titan struggling with his bonds, it rages and plunges round the impenetrable barriers that hem it in ; and at last, having gathered anew its mighty energies, rushes headlong on in a fresh direction, and bounds away, free, fearless, and triumphant.

Continuing in its new course—having turned less than a right-angle—but a short distance, it rolls away gradually to the west, and having regained its former direction, hurries on, inclining now to the right, and again bending to the left, here maddened by restraint, and there soothed

by expansion, to the end of the mountain-plain, from the gaping jaws of which it rushes angrily forth, but soon recovering the serenity of its native seas, and no longer chafed or enraged, it flows quietly and smoothly on, through gentle curves and wooing banks, to the sweet lake whose soft embrace it has come so far, and encountered so much, to meet, and in whose peaceful bosom it finally sinks to repose.

From the foot of the mountain ridge to lake Ontario, nothing can be more lovely than this river. It is a rapture to look upon its bright and tranquil course. It glides along so silently and almost imperceptibly, its surface is so calm and glassy, its breadth so uniform and expansive, its waters so clear and deep, its banks so smooth and regular, its curvatures so gradual and alternate, its whole aspect so pleasing and harmonious, that a delicious languor steals over the mind, the spirit yields itself unconsciously to a sweet oblivion of turbulence and strife, and its contemplations are of sunny skies, shining streams, and shady groves. The eye lingers with delight upon the blended hues, the graceful turns, and emerald shores of the no longer agitated, but now beautiful Niagara; and the soul, at peace with itself, with nature, and with all things, indulges in a dreamy delirium

of joy, unshadowed by care, untinged with gloom, and unbroken by tumult.

Each of the four great divisions of the strait has its peculiar and distinguishing characteristics. Those are from Lake Erie to the rapids, majesty, extent, variety; from the rapids to the ferry, immensity, energy, sublimity; from the ferry to Lewiston, restraint, activity, vigour; from Lewiston to Lake Ontario, placidity, beauty, repose. The banks of the river partake of the different features of the stream. Above the Falls they are of variable height, shape, and consistency, now low, grassy, and lawn-like, and now high, dark, and frowning; at the Falls they are bold, grand, impending; from the ferry to Lewiston, they are lofty, rugged, uneven; and from thence to the lake, they are smooth, sloping and regular. From the efflux of the river, to the cataract, they are from five to one hundred feet high; from the Falls to the end of the mountain ridge, they are from one hundred and seventy, to three hundred and seventy feet perpendicular height; at Lewiston they are one hundred feet high, and from thence to the lake, they have a gradual and unbroken descent. At Schlosser the banks are thirteen feet higher than the level of Lake Erie; at the Falls they are one hundred and nine feet, and

at the heights near Lewiston, thirty-eight feet above the same level.

The river below the Falls and near the ferry, is two hundred and fifty feet deep, as ascertained by actual measurement, — in other places, no bottom has ever been found. Its width at the ferry, is about seventy-six rods; a short distance below, it is contracted to fifty-six rods; from thence to Lewiston, it varies from twenty-five to one hundred rods, and from Lewiston to the lake, from one half to three fourths of a mile in breadth. The narrowest point is at the Whirlpool, where it is but twenty-five rods across.

The descent of the river from its efflux, to Black Rock is six feet; from thence to the rapids, ten feet; from the head of the rapids to the cataract, fifty-eight feet; the cataract itself, one hundred and fifty-four feet; from the Falls to Lewiston, one hundred and four feet; and from Lewiston to Lake Ontario, about two feet. The whole declivity of the strait from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario, is therefore three hundred and thirty-four feet!

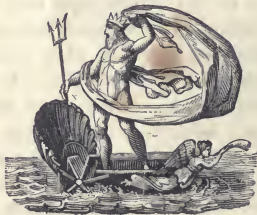
It has been a subject of much dispute, whether or not the Falls have receded from the heights at Lewiston to their present place, and the question yet remains undecided. The author's opinion

may be of small importance, but it is proper that it should be expressed. From a careful observation of all their phenomena, and of the whole extent of the chasm, he is satisfied that they have, but that their retrocession has been extremely slow. The nature of the rocks, the appearance of the channel, the known history of the cataract, all seem to confirm the supposition.

If it be true that they have so far receded, to what august speculations does it not give rise? What a time must have elapsed, what a prodigious power must have been exerted, ere the floods of this mighty river could have rent a passage three hundred feet deep, through the living rocks, for a distance of seven miles! When did this great work commence? What progress, and what pauses were made? How long was its course delayed in hollowing out that vast basin the Whirlpool? When was the first crag torn from the rugged brow of Iris Island? How long has the cataract been digging at the dread abyss upon whose verge it labours? Imagination recoils in terror from the task of tracing this stupendous movement. Untold ages must have watched with awe the "sublime march of Niagara to the music of its own deep thunders!"

Having thus sketched with a rapid but timorous

hand, the main features of the strait in which the Falls resound, and given a brief, but accurate account of the several towns, villages, and other places on its borders, we come now to the great cataract itself, and the many remarkable scenes in its vicinity ; and if we fail to describe that which is far too grand for description, we shall at least endeavour to direct the attention of the reader to all the different points and views which he ought to visit and examine, relate so much of them as may be told, and thus guide him to a right observation and a proper judgment of this most sublime and magnificent object of wonder and curiosity in the known material universe.





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PICTORIAL GUIDE
TO
NIAGARA FALLS.

PART II.

THE CATARACT
AND OTHER
OBJECTS OF CURIOSITY.

"Flow on forever in thy glorious robe
Of terror and of beauty. God hath set
His rainbow on thy forehead, and the cloud
Mantles around thy feet!"



PICTORIAL GUIDE TO NIAGARA FALLS.

CHAPTER I.

APOSTROPHE TO THE FALLS—FIRST FEELING—GENERAL FEATURES—THE RAPIDS—CASCADES—FORM AND SIZE OF THE CATARACT—SPRAY—THE ABYSS—WATER CARRIED OVER—ROAR—BAROMETRICAL—VIBRATIONS OF THE EARTH—HUES AND TINTS—SCENERY—SUMMER—AUTUMN—WINTER—ICE-BRIDGE—DESIGN OF THE CREATOR.

"My brain grows wild, sense wanders as I gaze
Upon the hurrying waters, and my sight
Vainly would follow, as towards the verge
Sweeps the wide torrent. Waves innumerable
Meet there and madden; waves innumerable
Urge on and overtake the waves before,
And disappear in thunder and in foam.
They reach, they leap the barrier: the abyss
Swallows insatiable the sinking waves.
A thousand rainbows arch them, and the woods
Are deafened with the everlasting roar."



ONARCH of floods! how shall I
approach thee?—how speak of thy
glory?—how extol thy beauty?
Ages have seen thy awful majesty;
earth has paid tribute to thy great-
ness; the best and wisest among men have bent

the knee at thy footstool, but none have and none can describe thee ! Alone thou standest among the wonders of nature, unshaken by the shock of contending elements, flinging back the flash of the lightning, and outroaring the thunder of the tempests' rage ! Allied to the everlasting hills, and claiming kindred with the eternal flood, thou art pillared upon the one, and the other supplies thy surge. Primeval rocks environ, clouds cover, and the rainbow crowns thee. A divine sublimity rests on thy fearful brow, an awful beauty is revealed in thy terrible countenance, and the heavy earth is shaken by thy tremendous voice. Born in the dark past, and alive to the distant future, what to thee are the paltry concerns of man's ambition ? — the rise or fall of empires and dynasties, the contests of kings, or the crash of thrones ? Thou art unmoved by the fate of nations, and the revolutions of the earth are to thee but the pulses of time. Kings before thee are but men, and man but a type of insignificance !

Such are some of the sensations and thoughts awakened at the sight of Niagara. Such sublimity, such immensity, such power ! Overshadowing all earthly considerations by its solemn greatness, and contrasting the feebleness of human strength with a force visibly reaching to the

infinite, the cataract impresses almost every one who beholds it for the first time, with the feeling of self-abasement so well expressed by Mrs. Sigourney in the lines —

“Thou dost make the soul
A wondering witness of thy majesty ;
And while it rushes with delirious joy
To tread thy vestibule, dost chain its steps,
And check its rapture, with the humbling view
Of its own nothingness ;”

and so entirely confounds him by its magnitude, grandeur, and energy, that he is for a time utterly unable to individualize and appreciate the august and ineffable attributes of this wonderful and glorious work of the Omnipotent Architect, who formed and harmonized its amazing and awful proportions.

After having become more familiarized with its general aspect, and examined it more in detail, we find that it is in every part entitled to unbounded admiration. Every time it is looked upon, some new beauty, or some fresh sublimity is perceived, and we begin gradually to realize what a grand combination of separate and distinct objects of interest are blended into one overpowering and perfect whole, the *tout ensemble* of which leaves nothing to be desired, and can by nothing be

paralleled. It may tire the eye by its vastness, and fatigue the ear by its rush, but can never pall upon the mind, and when the senses are refreshed by rest, they return to it with delight. The soul clings to it with a likeness of religious faith, for awe becomes softened into love, and affection is elevated to reverence. All things really great or beautiful grow upon our esteem at each succeeding interview or communion ; as on the other hand, all things insignificant or ugly lessen in our respect every time they are encountered.

A mighty river pours down a tremendous height, and falls into a vast abyss : — this is a grand cataract — Niagara is something more. Its sea of rapids, its clouds of spray, its lake of foam, its projecting cliffs, its piled-up rocks, its gorgeous colours, its fine cascades, its lovely islands, its giant caves, its deafening roar, — these, and a host of other marvels and beauties, combine to make up that wonderful thing, Niagara ! and each of these claims especial attention, and is worthy of particular praise.

The river Niagara, after a course of twenty-one miles, has a rapid declination, and rushing down with inconceivable fury, is impeded by rocks and ledges, dashing around and over which it is thrown into terrible confusion, and, leaping here,

plunging there, raging, tumbling, whirling, foaming on, boiling in one place, billowing in another, and maddening every where, is so convulsed and tossed about that it resembles literally a "hell of waters." Such are the rapids—more particularly that part of them nearest the American shore. On the opposite side, the bed of the river has a greater declivity, the water is much deeper, and the intumescence less apparent. There, however, they are immensely grand, and the prodigious volume of water rushing down from ledge to ledge, with an impetuosity beyond conception violent, forms a scene less turbulent, but, if possible, even more magnificent.

At the head of the rapids the river is bifurcated by Goat or Iris Island, which separates it into two unequal parts—that on the Canada side being much the broadest—which are not again united until it has passed the cataract, the Island extending to, and forming part of the precipice, and thus dividing the fall into two several and distinct cascades. Hence the plural *Falls*. An inconsiderable portion of the lesser of these cascades is cut off on the side next Iris Island, by Luna or Prospect Island, and is called the Central Fall. The water consequently descends in three distinct sheets; and we have the American or Schlosser

Fall between the American shore and Prospect Island ; the Central or Crescent Fall between Prospect and Iris Islands, and the British or Horse-shoe Fall between Iris Island and the Canada shore — these form the Cataract of Niagara.

The form of the cataract is an irregular indented curve, measuring — Iris and Prospect Islands inclusive — something more than fourteen hundred yards, or above three fourths of a mile — the periphery of the Horse-shoe Fall being about seven hundred yards, of the Central Fall about twenty yards, and of the American Fall three hundred and thirty yards. The perpendicular visible descent, on the American side, is one hundred and sixty-four feet — of the Horse-shoe Fall, one hundred and fifty-eight feet. By far the largest portion of the river, is carried over the Horse-shoe Fall, where the water is so deep as to flow almost smoothly over, and pass down in one vast unbroken sheet.

The spray from this part of the Falls rises in such dense masses, as sometimes to obscure nearly the whole view from below, and hovers in such vast clouds above the cataract as to be visible forty or fifty miles. It is often seen by the distant observer, when the sky is clear and there is no wind, to float up and undulate gently above the

Falls, like an immense milk-white plume, fringed with gold, and tinted with the most delicate and beautiful colours. When the wind is strong down the river, the spray fills the whole chasm with a thick foggy mist, and renders the ferry-crossing not a little uncomfortable, from the drenching showers that fall around. At sunrise on a clear morning, other circumstances being favourable, the rising mists, or spray, present a variety of beautiful and interesting phenomena ; now rolling up in huge fantastic and curling volumes, glowing in richest purple, crimson, gold, and a thousand other bright and blended hues ; and now sparkling in the light like a shower of precious stones, or as if the prismatic rays were frolicking among the falling drops.

The foot of the Falls is never seen from these dense clouds of mist and spray, that are forever rolling up ; and the great body of water in the basin below is violently agitated and tossed, panting and throbbing as if it had an imprisoned earthquake struggling to get free, within its heaving bosom, or was convulsed by the torture of internal fires. The whole surface is covered with a thick white foam, and resembles a tempestuous sea of milk, surging, boiling, whirling, and billowing as it rolls away, and at last, rippling and dissolving in

the distance, or nestling in little patches among the rocks and eddies of the shore. Seen from above, the abyss appears like a vast seething cauldron, bubbling, foaming, and steaming up, without relaxation, and without repose. This confused turbulence, is undoubtedly occasioned by the action and reaction of the prodigious body of water falling from so great a height, and forced to such an immense depth. The buried volumes crowding each other on, and pushing and displacing the superincumbent mass, with an energy and power proportioned to their quantity and impulsion, must of necessity produce a tremendous agitation, and keep the whole accumulating and shifting flood in constant commotion and turmoil.

The quantity of water precipitated over the cataract has been variously estimated by different persons. Dr. Dwight, supposing a current of six miles an hour, computes it at 1,225,125,000 tons per day ; 102,093,750 tons per hour ; 170,156 tons per minute ; and 28,359 tons per second ; and this, incredibly great as the quantity must appear, is probably a close approximation to the truth. Of course, it is not always the same. A strong wind down the lake has the effect of raising the river above the Falls one or two feet, and inversely in a less proportion. A rise of eighteen inches

above the cataract, causes the water to rise in the basin beneath, above fifteen feet. This phenomenon is owing to the contraction of the channel below.

The banks of the river at the Falls, average nearly two hundred and fifty feet in height, and present a most imposing appearance. In several places they project over to a considerable distance ;—at Table Rock, in particular, this feature is strikingly apparent, and enables the visiter to pass some distance under the great sheet itself, where one of the most grand and impressive scenes is presented to the awe-struck beholder, of which it is possible to conceive. Along the whole end of Iris Island the vast rock of which it is composed, is also impending, and has a dangerous and fearful aspect, which produces upon some nerves, a terrific and quite overpowering effect.

The noise, or roar of the cataract, is not so astounding as the lover of thunder might perhaps desire ; but it is in keeping with the scene, and may be heard twenty or thirty miles. Ordinarily, it falls upon the ear with a ceaseless rushing sound, like that of a strong wind through a forest of trees, for which it is sometimes mistaken by persons approaching the Falls. But it is deep,

solemn, and continuous, and though it does not burst upon the tympanum like the startling crash of worlds, is yet inconceivably impressive. Some whose auricular organs are more delicately attuned than those of the many, find it almost insupportable. People in the vicinity of the Falls, from constantly hearing it, become so familiarized with the sound, that it is scarcely perceived — like the air they breathe, it is a part of the world in which they live and move, and hence, too common to be remarked. It has been said, that its effect upon the inhabitants near, is, in time, to make them deaf ; but this, if it be so, is a fact yet to be established. In the village, its sweeter and sublimer sounds are hardly perceptible ; and even on the islands, or at Table Rock, are, so to speak, nearly drowned in the rush and roar of the tumbling floods ; but stop and listen — on the Terrapin Bridge for instance — and above, and as it were breaking through the general roar, you will hear its sonorous tones rolling up like subdued thunder, peal following peal, rising, falling, swelling, and diminishing, in soft and musical cadences, and hymning an eternal anthem of sweet and solemn praise to its Almighty Maker. Not to hear this, is to lose one of the most delectable pleasures of Niagara.

The state of the atmosphere, of course, affects the roar of the Falls ; and the distance to which it may be heard is consequently dependent upon the rarity or density of the air. Generally, it may be distinguished four or five leagues off, but has frequently been observed at Buffalo, and once, it is said, even at Toronto, forty-five miles distant. In the region of country near the cataract, the noise affords to the inhabitants barometrical indications of the most unfailing and accurate character. When the sound is uncommonly loud and distinct, however clear the sky, or pleasant the season, it precurses a change of weather, and a coming storm. An opposite predication based upon the reverse of this phenomenon, is also infallibly verified by the event. And thus even the hidden decrees of destiny are in part revealed to man, by the prophet-voiced roar of the thunder-tongued cataract.

The solid earth vibrates in unison with the concussions of the cataract, and is affected sensibly by the shock of the contending floods. You do not indeed feel the ground shaking beneath your feet, but in the most substantial buildings, a tremulous motion is at times apparent, which can arise from nothing but the jar of the Falls. In the stillness of night, this sympathy of the shores with

the cataract, is most apparent ; the shutters creak, the windows rattle, and strangers sometimes awake in the midst of a fancied tempest, to find the sky serene, the winds hushed, and the bright moon and stars shedding their silver rays upon the beautiful earth and the shining stream.

Almost every imaginable tint in nature may be seen at the Falls, in the gorgeous and shifting rainbows that meet you at almost every turn — now sleeping quietly below, now arching the chasm, anon resting on the brink, and then stretching up from the frothing abyss to the dizzy verge of the cataract, here shooting up from the edge of the precipice, there floating self-poised in the mid-mist of the vapoury exhalations, now belting the sheet as with a zone of beauty, and often circling the spray with a cestus more bewitching than that of the fabled Venus — in the rich and diversified colouring of the rapids, cascades, and basin ; and in that of the rocks, trees, and foliage, the mists and spray, that surround, cover, and beautify the most grand, lovely, and august of all earthly manifestations of creative energy.

The sheet as it pours down the precipice is variegated with many exquisite tints, the majority of which are so delicate, as to be indescribable —

here wreathed in sparkling diamonds, there robed in purest white, and elsewhere shining in blue, amber, chrystal, brown, yellow, grey, and emerald hues, melting and blending together, as if in emulation of the Iris which hovers ever around them. The foam in the broad basin below is generally of a milky white, but is said by Ingraham to present sometimes the appearance of a "bed of roses in a field of snow." The usual colour of the stream is a deep green, but it is also tinted with various shades of beauty. The grass, flowers, and foliage on the banks and islands, gemmed and starred with spray, and glistening and flashing in the sunlight, may neither be imagined nor described.

The scenery about the Falls in summer, may be imaged by the lovely reaching to the sublime ; and in winter by the sublime stooping to the lovely. At the latter season it is magnificent, in the former, beautiful. In autumn too—how glorious, how varied, how exquisite it is in autumn !

In summer, the earth, the trees, the shores, the islands, and parts of the very rocks, are clothed with a living emerald of luxurious growth. Watered by the spray, the rich earth teems with vegetation, and sends up a thousand forms of life and

loveliness. Shrubs, flowers, and foliage cover and almost encumber the ground, which, clad in verdure, and breathed upon by the wind, seems a rippling sea of greenness. Vines and ivy climb the tall trees, twine their tendril-fingers around the twigs and branches, and meet and mingle their leaves together : — beauty embracing strength, — weakness cherished by vigour. The humble moss freshens and fattens on the logs, roots, and even rocks ; interlaces and extends its tiny fibres ; and derives health and nourishment from the pure air, and the sweet spray of Niagara. Bushes, and even large trees, stoop to look over the banks and down upon the stream ; and the more lowly plants creep between them to the verge, and hang over the abyss, seemingly to enjoy the same splendid prospect. The trees, and the air too, are populous with animal and insect life. Birds, squirrels, butterflies, bees, grasshoppers, — these, and many other beautiful but harmless creatures, fill the air with their glad rejoicings, and wanton among the leaves and flowers. There is everything to interest, amuse, and delight ; but nothing to vex, annoy, or alarm ; and such is summer at Niagara.

In autumn, the scene is changed indeed, and addresses itself to the eye and the understanding, rather than to the heart and the affections. The

scenery is indescribably beautiful, variegated with every imaginable shade of colouring; and, like the death-bed of a christian, seems designed to banish the fear of dissolution, by showing that the end of life may be even better than the beginning or the fullness, invested as it is with such a surpassing glory. The exceeding richness of forest scenery in a North American autumn, has been often said and sung; and the effect of that season upon Niagara bids defiance to the tongue or pen. Suffice then to say, that new and grand combinations of beauty are there displayed, which charm the eye, chain the attention, and fasten upon the mind; and which will remain fixed in the memory long after the lapse of years has erased many and later impressions of other and different objects. Niagara in autumn, is a grand subject for a great painter; but, unfortunately, — *beyond his art!*

In winter, how different still, and, O, how magnificent! The grass is turned to pearl, the forest to coral, and the foliage to chrystal, by the falling and freezing spray. Rocks of glass, columns of alabaster, trees of coral, and the rainbows resting upon the chrystal branches, and nestling among the diamond twigs and tendrils! A writer upon the Falls, long a resident there, and familiar with

the scenery at all seasons, well observes, that it is "worth a journey of thousands of miles" to obtain a sight of Niagara in winter. Groves of spar bending beneath a weight of brilliants, in all the blazonry of splendor, allure and dazzle the eye; and, stirred by the wind, rain down upon the alabaster earth showers of emerald, amethyst, topaz, and other precious stones, glistening in the sunlight, and still shining where they fall.

The stream, a sporting sea of silver, springs in bright-sparkling fleecy masses, down a porcelain precipice, and falling upon rocks of translucent chalcedony, carved into strange and curious shapes, covered with ingenious and quaint devices, and fringed around with pointed pendants of chrystal, dashes glittering up, filling the air with starry, lustrous, rainbow-wreaths of beauty. Chrystalline stalactites of enormous size and immeasurable length, overlaying and clustering round each other in many a fanciful and fantastic shape, forming colonnades, pilastres, capitals, and cornices, ornamented and enriched by a beautiful fretwork of glassy texture and delicate tracery—hang down the banks and mock the sun with their lustre, making of the chasm and cataract, a glorious and gorgeous temple and altar of the Eternal, from which a snowy incense rolls up in

graceful convolutions, cloud-like, to Heaven ! It is indeed, a fairy scene : — but like the heartless splendor of courts — CHILLING ! A fairy scene indeed, for it is not real : — a cloud passing over the sun will destroy all its blazonry, and leave only — ICE ! Still it is inimitably beautiful, and worth a pilgrimage to witness, if only for a moment.

Below the cataract, the spray congealing as it falls, and constantly accreting, forms mountains of ice that nearly overtop the precipice, and seem like vast columns of transparent sun-bright chrysal, supporting the silvery sheet, and lending it a thousand hues. The river never freezes over, but large masses of ice are sometimes collected and blocked in, so as to form a natural bridge, extending nearly up to the foot of the Falls, and for two miles down the stream.* Magnificent views of the cataract are then obtained from this frozen platform, and splendors surpassing those of the Polar

* A bridge of this kind was formed below the Falls during the past winter, of uncommon dimensions. The ice was not less than one hundred feet thick, and rose above the water from thirty to forty feet. People crossed on it for some days, from the foot of the Biddle Stair-case to the Canada side. At the ferry the river was thus passable for several months; and a small house was built near the centre for the sale of liquors and other refreshments.

Seas are beheld. Such is Niagara in winter, only the half is not, and could not be told.

One might almost fancy that Niagara was designedly placed by the Creator in the temperate zone, that it might not always wear the same livery of loveliness, but that the peculiar excellences of each of the three great regions of the earth, might in turn enrich, beautify, and adorn this favoured and glorious work of his power. That in summer it might have the warmth, brilliancy, and luxuriance of the tropics; in autumn the strong contrasts, vivid hues, and varying dyes of the middle region; and in winter the icy splendor, chrystalline magnificence, and starry lustre of the frozen zone. All that is rich, all that is striking, all that is gorgeous in nature, thus centres in one holy spot, beautifying sublimity, adorning immensity, and making the awful attractive. Men come from all the ends of the earth to see Niagara, and well they may!

Having thus briefly glanced over the principal features of the cataract, and of the scenery that surrounds it, we come next to perform our office of "GUIDE," and point out the different localities and objects that ought to be visited and observed, and in their proper order of succession.

CHAPTER II.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS—DIRECTIONS—PROSPECT POINT—
VIEW ON CANADA SIDE—VIEWS ON THE AMERICAN SIDE—
PROSPECT PLACE—AMERICAN FALL—WARE'S OBSERVATO-
RY—BRIDGE TO BATH ISLAND—TOLL HOUSE—MR. JACOBS
—MASTODON TOOTH—SHIP AND BRIG ISLANDS—LOVER'S
RETREAT—POPPING THE QUESTION.

"I saw its waters plunge to yawning caves,
Where danced the floating Iris on their waves;
Then, further off, on the green moss divide
In streamlets foaming still, the sheeted tide,
Shrouding the flowery sod with network frail,
Spread and contract by turns its waving veil,
And filling all the glade with voice and spray,
Sweep in its tides of quivering light away!
I saw them mount, and roll, and downward glide,
And loved to dream bewildered by their side!"



E WILL suppose that the traveller has reached the village of Niagara Falls, selected his temporary home, secured his room, attended to the safe deposit of his luggage; and is now anxious and impatient to visit the grand cataract, and see the wonderful scenes, about which so much has been said and written, but which he is now, for the first time, about to behold. Is it so, reader?—Well, we are ready to conduct you.

On leaving your hotel, turn to the left, and con-

tinue down Main-street, till, passing the massive foundation of the Niagara Falls Hotel, and turning around it to the left, the depot of the Buffalo and Niagara Falls Rail-Road is before you. Proceed directly on by the depot, and diagonally through the grove of trees beyond it, inclining to the right, and keeping along the brow of the upper bank or ridge, to the river. Having reached this spot, you are now at Prospect Point, and the object of your eager curiosity is at hand.

You stand upon the brow of the precipice, and the cataract is before you. Heavens, what a scene! The river rolls by in the sunlight like a ruffled sea of silver, two hundred feet beneath the cliff from which you look down, bounded on either side by huge frowning walls of limestone, crested by smiling villages, fair fields, and clustering forest trees, stretching away in the distance. The agitated and heaving abyss, the clouds of rising spray, the flashing snowy sheets hanging between sea and sky, the dark cliffs and islands that bound and divide them, the ocean of tumbling waters that seem sporting above and beyond the precipice, and come dancing over the cataract to the music of its everlasting roar, together form a scene, compared to which the ruins of Balbec or Palmyra, the Pyramids of Egypt, or

the temples of Greece and Rome, are but the toys and foot-balls of time.

The best view of the Falls, on the American side, is from this point. Table Rock, the Horse-shoe Fall, Iris Island, the Central Fall, the American Fall, the rapids and islands above, and the abyss and river below, are all within sight ; but of the Horse-shoe Fall the view is distant and partial. In fact, there is no complete view of the cataract on the American side. From the opposite shore only, can Niagara be seen, in all its parts, and in all its sublime majesty, at a single glance. But that one view, grand and overwhelming as it confessedly is, is almost the only one on the Canada shore. There are, it is true, many modifications of it, dependant upon the points from which it is observed ; but it is still the same in all its leading features, and has a strange oneness about it, that awes even more than it interests. The eye and the mind, pained by its transcendant vastness and sublimity, can scarcely dwell long upon it, without some interval of repose.

On the American side, on the contrary, while there is no one view of the cataract so grand and perfect, there are many of different parts, each exceedingly beautiful and impressive ; and such

a variety of river and forest scenery, that the attention is diverted from one object to another, — something new and fresh is presented at every turn, the eye is delighted, and the mind excited by a constant succession of pleasing and august appearances, — and thus a delicious interest is kept up, which seems to wile away the hours ; and while lovely and striking images are fast crowding upon the eye and mind, they are both, as it were, refreshed and renovated by novelty and change.

From Prospect Point, having looked at the glorious scene as long as you choose, advance to the very brink of the cataract, at Prospect Place. Here, standing on a projecting crag, and holding by the dwarf cedars that fringe it, you can look directly down at the awful depth, the huge blocks of stone, the rock-dashed spray and foam, the shivering sheet, and the heaving abyss, and up at the Falls, and particularly the American cascade, of which you have a capital view, though not the best.

The American Fall is characterized by an irregularity that gives it a wild and singular beauty. The outline is far projecting and deeply indented, yet with no very abrupt transitions, and certainly no monotonous parallels. The water flows over it

in a broad billowy stream, and is thrown out by craggy points in a hundred places, so that it passes down in a glorious snow-white drapery, wreathing into graceful fleecy folds, and possessing so much variety with so complete a unity, that it not only awes but delights, and you almost forget its immensity in the contemplation of its beauty. Near the shore, where the water is shallow, the stream ripples along pure and clear as chrystal, and falls from the brink in a shower of sparkling brilliancy. Large rocks lay piled up at the foot of the precipice, where it is evident they have fallen from the dizzy height, and the descending torrent dashing against them, flashes up in foam and spray. The river below rolls away to the right, like an emerald sea caressing the sunbeams, till it is lost to the view in its deep and devious course; and the bold bank rises opposite, black, ragged, and impending, with the Clifton House sitting in swan-like whiteness on its fearful summit, like Hesper on the gloomy brow of night.

Mr. Ware, a very clever and intelligent man, has an observatory on the ferry house, scarce a dozen steps from Prospect Place, where you have a fine view of the same scenes, from a more elevated position. He has also canes, refreshments,

and many other articles for sale, and is entitled to a generous share of patronage.

Having looked at the Falls as long as you desire, from these places, pass up the river along its shore; feasting your eyes upon the wild waters, and the splendid scenery of banks and islands, till you reach the bridge leading from the American shore to Bath Island—from which you have a magnificent view of the rapids, dashing and foaming beneath and around you. The water drives along with such immense velocity and force, that one can scarcely conceive how this bridge could have been built. Only sixty-four rods above the cataract, and in the very rush and whirl of the mad torrent, it is no wonder that strangers inquire with an eager curiosity how it was possible to construct it in so dangerous and difficult a place. The *modus operandi* was this:—

An abutment of proper size and solidity was first made; then two large and long timbers were projected far over it, the hinder ends of which were firmly secured by piling on tons of weight. Upon these timbers planks were then laid, and a temporary bridge thus formed, from the extremity of which large stones were let down into the stream, till the pile rose above the water, when a



BRIDGE TO BATII ISLAND.

firm pier was built around it, by framing timbers together, sinking them, and filling up with stone. This pier and the abutment were then joined by a section of the permanent bridge, firmly and strongly built. The long timbers were then again thrust forward, and a second pier made, and united to the first, by another section of the bridge. Proceeding in this manner from pier to pier, the whole bridge was finally constructed, and a safe and easy communication established to Bath Island. By the same process, Bath Island was connected with Iris Island, by a similar bridge, and the object accomplished — Iris Island being now united to the main land, and rendered accessible to all.

The first bridge to Iris Island was built by General Whitney, in 1817. It was some distance farther up the stream, and was carried away by the ice, in the spring of the following year. The present one was erected the ensuing summer, by the brothers Porter, who are entitled to great credit for their enterprise and ingenuity in designing and executing a work of such magnitude and utility. The whole extent of bridge is forty-four rods, — twenty-eight rods to Bath Island, and thence sixteen rods to Iris Island, — the cost about sixteen hundred dollars. In 1839 the whole bridge was thoroughly examined and repaired, and is

now in a most secure, substantial, and perfect condition.

At Bath Island register your name, and pay the toll, twenty-five cents, which will give you a right to pass and repass as often as you choose during the year, without further charge. The toll-house is kept by the worthy and accommodating Mr. Jacobs, who has collected quite a little museum of curiosities of different kinds, and will be happy to dispose of canes, specimens, bead-work, etc. of which, with refreshments, he keeps a large assortment for sale.

Among the curiosities to be seen here, is a molar tooth of the mastodon, which was found near the rail-road depot, thirteen and a half feet below the surface of the earth. It is in good preservation — the enamel nearly perfect — and but little worn. How it came in the place where it was discovered, is a mystery. It must have been there many ages, as evinced by the depth from which it was exhumed, and the firm texture of the strata in which it was embedded. The huge animal to whom it once belonged, was doubtless young, and probably died while on a visit to the cataract ; — but this is mere speculation. We do not know that any similar fossil remains, have ever before been found in this vicinity.

Ship and Brig Islands, — so called, because their shape, and the inclination of several trees, gave them a fancied resemblance to such vessels, — lie just above Bath Island, with which the former is connected by a foot-bridge, which though slight, and seemingly frail, is perfectly safe. A gate adjoining the toll-house, opens upon the path leading directly to it.

These beautiful islands are among the most lovely retreats of earth. Sleeping quietly in the midst of the wild mad rapids, of which they command most excellent views ; covered with a luxuriant forest growth of vines and trees, forming delightful arbours, carpeted with grass, moss, and flowers, canopied by the thickly clustering foliage, and provided with comfortable, though rustic seats, they seem sacred to innocence, affection, and friendship ; — like the love-spots of life, looking rapturously through a sea of care and trouble. Pity that the bridge uniting these two sweet little islands, was destroyed, — it should be rebuilt without delay.

Ship Island has sometimes been called the “ Lover’s Retreat,” and certainly a more appropriate name could scarcely be found, in the whole catalogue of cognomens, as any one will confess who pays a visit to its endearing seclusions. Of

all places in the world, it seems the best for that delicate and difficult task — “POPPING THE QUESTION,” — for a lady could hardly say “no” with the rapids rolling and roaring around her, and the very genius of the place seeming to whisper “it is not good to be alone.” But the reader is perchance no lover, and as he is impatient, we hasten on to Iris Island.



CHAPTER III.

IRIS ISLAND—NAMES, INITIALS AND DATES ON THE TREES
—THE HOG'S BACK—CENTRAL FALL—PROSPECT ISLAND—
VIEW OF THE AMERICAN FALL—OTHER ISLANDS—PROFILES
ON THE ROCK—RAINBOW—TERRAPIN BRIDGE AND ROCKS
—HORSE-SHOE FALL—PROSPECT TOWER.

"Bright Isle! to the waves that are dashing around,
To the mad-leaping torrents that wildly resound,
Thy fame and thy beauty, thy costume and crown,
Thy gem-spangled robe, and thy name of renown,
Thou dost owe—and the glory that hallows thy form,
Thus born of the rock, wave, and air battle-storm,
Exalts thee above all the isles of the sea,
By the terrible splendors reflected on thee;
Yet the grandeur it gives is allied to decay,
And 'tis gnawing thy life with its foam-teeth away."



RIS ISLAND, commencing at the head of the rapids, extends to the precipice, of which, as before stated, it forms a part. It is about half a mile in length, eighty rods wide, and contains over sixty acres of arable land. It is sometimes called "Goat Island," and obtained that appellation from the following circumstance. A Mr. Steadman, then resident at Schlosser, in 1770 placed a variety of animals upon it, and among others a number of goats. Of these, a bearded patriarch was the only one who survived

the severity of winter, and he remained for a long time its sole occupant. Its more appropriate name of "Iris Island" is derived from the beautiful rainbows always to be seen from it in sunny weather. A portion of the Island has been cleared off, and a garden enclosed, in which there are some excellent fruit trees, a variety of plants and flowers, and a fish pond. The major part is still, however, covered with a fine forest growth, which is held sacred from the stroke of the spoiler — and through the dense foliage of which, the rays of the sun find it in many places, almost impossible to penetrate. It is cool, shady, and pleasant; and is the object of unceasing admiration. Comfortable seats are placed at the most important points, where the visitor can sit at ease, and luxuriate in the beautiful and sublime scenes presented to his view.

The trunks, and even high branches of the trees, are covered with names, initials, and dates; some fresh to appearance, and others almost obliterated by time, decay, and the growing bark. Most persons desire to leave some memorial of their visit, as a *souvenance* to others, in return perhaps, for the pleasure they have derived from a like remembrance.

The earliest date to any name yet found upon the

trees, which may be considered authentic, is said to be 1769. There are some professedly earlier, but they are supposed to have been dated back from an impulse of puerile vanity. Near the cataract, on the American side, there are names chiselled upon the rocks, bearing date 1711, 1726, 1745, and later, which are believed to be genuine.



VIEW FROM HOG'S BACK.

Upon leaving the bridge from Bath Island, turn to the right, and pass along the bank of Iris Island to the Hog's Back, — a narrow ridge so named from its shape — at its lowest extremity.

From this point, you have a fine view of the Central Fall, the American Fall, the river below, and the picturesque scenery through which it flows. At the farthest point of the stream you see a small white spot like a speck of foam: it is the commencement of the Whirlpool rapids, and is nearly two miles distant.

The Central Fall is formed by a small portion of the river—cut off by Prospect Island from the American branch,—which rolls in a clear, beautiful and sparkling volume to the precipice, where it bounds away, like a gladsome and fearless thing, in a smooth and almost unbroken sheet. You gaze upon it with delight, and descending to the verge of the abyss, if your limbs be steady and your nerves firm, you may see its chrystal and snowy column fall far down, till it loses itself in the mists that curl up from its base. It is behind this cascade, and under the rock upon which you stand, that the Cave of the Winds, of which an account will be presently given, is situated. The Central Fall—called also from its shape, the Crescent Fall,—is about twenty yards in width, and the descent is greater than at any other part of the cataract.

Prospect—or Luna—Island, is a lovely sequestered spot, embowered with trees, where the

eagles were wont to build their nests, ere the foot of man had profaned its holiness. A commodious bridge conducts you to this pretty little island, where the American Fall is seen to better advantage than from any other elevated point. The view is indeed magnificent. The broad stream plunges down the precipice at your very feet, and the mighty cascade in all its majesty and glory stretches out before you. See its varied outline, its leaping voluted columns, in colour white as an angel's robe; its whole snowy front flashing down, and hiding, as if too bright and pure for earth, in the foam and spray of the abyss beneath. You will not soon forget the grandeur and beauty of that scene.

There are several other islands near, which might easily be rendered accessible, and which the pilgrim of curiosity would be delighted to visit. But now he can only admire them at a distance, and retrace his steps to Iris Island.

From the Hog's Back, a singular phenomenon is presented to view. It is that of three profile figures of the human face, upon the rock under the edge of the American Fall, so fully and clearly defined, that one can scarcely believe them to be the work of chance, and not of the sculptor's art. They are of gigantic size, but well-proportioned,



THE THREE PROFILES.

and are situated as shown in the engraving above. The first, or upper one represents a negro ; the

next, a young and well-favoured man, of the European race, and the lowest, an elderly and spectacted personage of the same descent. They appear to be of the male sex, and the features of each are singularly well defined. They were first observed last season, and are now regarded with no little interest. This strange trio certainly exhibit a very remarkable coincidence of casualties.

Having concluded your observation of the views and curiosities seen from this point, pass up along the bank to the British Fall. If it is yet early in the day, and the wind should happen to be up the river, the beautiful rainbow that smiled upon your gaze from the American Fall, now walks by your side, measuring its march by your own pace. When you stop, it stops ; when you start, it starts also. If you run, it keeps up with you ; if you linger, it waits. Like a guardian angel, it seems to watch your movements, whispering ever Faith, Hope, Heaven ; and giving back your glances of regard. But you cannot lure it far away from the Falls ;—it seems to woo your worship to God's most glorious work, and to melt away in despair when you leave it behind ; but when you return, it starts up to welcome you, and seems to delight in your presence.

Pursuing your way along the bank with the

rainbow for a companion, you have a noble view of the basin, the Horse-shoe Fall, and the rapids above. The vastness, the majesty of this cascade almost fatigue the mind, in its effort to grasp that which seems to defy calculation. You hasten to Terrapin Bridge,* to the rocks at its extremity, and stand, with the fall, the thunder, the spray, and the abyss at your feet. And what are you? — an atom in the midst of immensity; a breath of time on the brow of Eternity. How awful is the scene! You look up, and a tempest-tortured flood seems gushing from the far-off skies, rolling over the distant horizon, and coming with a lightning-like speed, and a whirlwind-like roar down the steep declivity, and then leaping at one fearful plunge from the bright world of the upper air, to the unimagined depths of the cloud-concealed profundity. There is no relaxation of the force, no depletion of the volume. Billow urges billow, torrent presses torrent, column crowds on column, and the vast mass that has fallen leaves not the less to descend, nor seems the more to fill up the chasm. The rapids, the cascade, the abyss, the foam, the spray, and the thunder; and

* This bridge was built by Gen. Whitney in 1827. It needs repairing sadly.

also the velocity, the intumescence, and the agitation, are all objects of separate and combined wonder and admiration.

The curve of the British Fall has now little resemblance to a horse-shoe, but something the shape of a figure 5, — without the horizontal dash at the top, — the point or lower extremity, resting on Table Rock. Near the Canada shore, the water falls in fleecy, snow-like masses, white, feathery, and shifting. But from thence to the Terrapin Rocks, — over three-fourths of the whole distance — it rolls down in one deep unbroken volume, grand, solemn, and appalling. The immense breadth of this Fall, the vast quantity of water poured down the precipice, the ocean of rapids above, the foaming sea below, the eternal-curling clouds of spray, and the deep hoarse thunder pealing ever up, produce by their conjoined effect, such an impression of power, energy, and majesty, that the mind recoils from its contemplation, and the soul, filled with awe, bows itself in reverent humility, feeling the Omnipotent presence. God is here made so manifest, by the wonderful display of His Almighty power, that disbelief vanishes, pride sinks abashed, and the conviction of the heart and soul is — How great is God ! how insignificant am I ! — He is omnipotent ;

I am nothing ! The cataract seems a consecrated place, surrounded and filled with the majesty, and glory, and power of the Eternal ; and the spot on which you stand sacred to his service. Fear, awe, and reverence are emotions which this sublime scene never fails to inspire. The God of the Universe is felt to be almost visibly present ; and the haughtiest of Earth's haughty ones, here tremble and adore.

From the Prospect Tower, — a round stone building, forty-five feet high, ascended by winding stairs, which was erected in 1833 by Judge Porter, — you have a magnificent view of the great Fall, the chasm, the rapids, Table Rock, and the surrounding scenery. You can look down into the very hollow and midst of the vast cascade, and almost see the elemental chaos, where the mist, the spray, the foam and thunder of the cataract have birth. Majesty, grandeur, sublimity, and beauty, — the glorious garniture of God, — are here spread out before you.

When you have wondered and admired as long as you choose from these places, ascend the bank, rest a while, and return back to the Biddle Staircase, which you passed on your way hither from the Hog's Back.

CHAPTER IV.

BIDDLE STAIR-CASE — ANGLING — SAM PATCH — MR. SMITH —
FANCIED DANGER — BRITISH FALL — LOWER FISHING-ROCK —
CAVE OF THE WINDS — FOOT OF PROSPECT ISLAND — PASSING
UNDER THE AMERICAN FALL — CIRCUIT OF THE ISLAND — EN-
CROACHMENT OF THE RIVER — MOSS ISLAND — THREE SIS-
TERS — HEAD OF IRIS ISLAND — MOUNDS AND SKELETONS.

“What august scenes salute the wondering eye!
Floods that seem gushing through the unruven sky,
Plunge madly down from glory into gloom —
Flash up in spray, and thunder from the tomb —
And with a far-descending wall of waves,
Bar the broad stream, and veil its misty caves;
While radiant splendors beautify the fall,
And Echo, answering to the Cataract’s call,
Leaps like a living thought from rock to rock —
Shadow of sound, and daughter of the shock !”



IT WAS long a desirable but difficult matter to reach the sloping bank, below the precipice, at the lower end of Iris Island, which prior to the year 1829, could only be attained by coming up in boats from the ferry. In the summer of that year, a convenient stair-case was erected, at an expense of three hundred dollars, by the munificence of Nicholas Biddle, Esq. the celebrated financier; by which a safe and speedy, though somewhat tiresome passage is

afforded to the various scenes of interest at the foot of the island, which are among the most grand and curious in this region of wonder.

A steep declivity of about forty feet, rendered practicable by a rude, but strong flight of common steps, leads down to the head of the Biddle Stair-case — as it is very properly called — which is in the form of a hexagon, enclosing triangular steps that wind spirally around a large and solid oak shaft, resting firmly on a durable foundation, and securely fastened to the rock at top. The steps are ninety in number, and the Stair-case about eighty feet high — from its base to the river, the descent is eighty feet, or from the top of the bank, one hundred and eighty-five feet. One of the finest places in the country for angling, is at this point of the river, where many varieties of fish are often caught in great abundance. It was here, that the celebrated Sam Patch made two successful leaps from a platform ninety-seven feet high, in the fall of 1829, shortly after the Stair-case was completed. This daring, but unfortunate individual, subsequently made two leaps at the Genesee Falls, from a still greater elevation; the last of which, from a height of one hundred and twenty-five feet, proved fatally disastrous. He was seen no more.

From the foot of the stair-case, well-worn paths lead up to the British Fall, where a most beautiful and awe-inspiring scene is witnessed ; and down to the Central Fall, and the Cave of the Winds, where views, if possible, even more grand are beheld.

At the Biddle Stair-case, the visiter is provided with a suitable dress by Mr. Smith, — a worthy and well-informed gentleman, perfectly familiar with the Falls, and both competent and willing to impart any information that may be desired on the subject—who has for sale the usual curiosities, canes, and refreshments, and who, for a small fee, furnishes the traveller with every thing necessary to enable him to pass behind the sheet, and into the Cave of the Winds. No change of dress is required, if the visiter does not wish to penetrate the regions of spray, and of course no charge is incurred. But these scenes should never be overlooked :—they are full of wonder and sublimity.

Properly equipped, you descend the stairs, from the head of which you have a noble view of the Horse-shoe Fall ; and pass up the stream to the grand cascade. This course is advised, because, usually, a person gets so thoroughly drenched in the Cave of the Winds, that dry clothing is an

object of immediate desire, and it is therefore best to visit that place the last, before a change of apparel. As you advance along the pathway at the foot of the cliff, with the vast mass of ragged



VIEW FROM BIDDLE STAIRS.

rocks impending above your head, and, apparently, threatening instant destruction, it will be strange if you do not feel a deep sense of danger. Innumerable pieces of stone seem as if on the very point of tumbling down ; and all around you lie the broken fragments that at different times have fallen. But there is little fear :—among the thousands and tens of thousands of persons who have sauntered along the path you are treading, not one has been injured. Only a single accident

of the kind is known ever to have occurred, and that happened near the Central Fall.

You approach the foot of the cataract, and look up at the high over-hanging cliff, the Terrapin Rocks, almost poised upon the dizzy brink, and the far-falling torrent, that comes plunging down, dashed to foam and spray on the huge masses of lime-stone, that lie heaped around, having evidently been torn from the verge of the precipice, far above you. A splendid, though but partial view of the British Fall may be obtained from the rocks at the river-margin below. About three-fourths of that sublime cascade, is then directly before you, stretching from Table Rock, across the heaving and foaming sea of agitation, which it walls with a flashing flood, in its huge and gigantic proportions. From the point just above you, the water falls in white, fleecy, incoherent columns, like tumbling masses of fresh-formed snow ; light, feathery, and fanciful in its changing shapes, and lovely in its fleeting descent, as a fairy dream of delight. If the wind is favourable, you can pass some distance behind the sheet, and feel the sublimity of a scene, that sets description at defiance, and fills the soul with emotion.

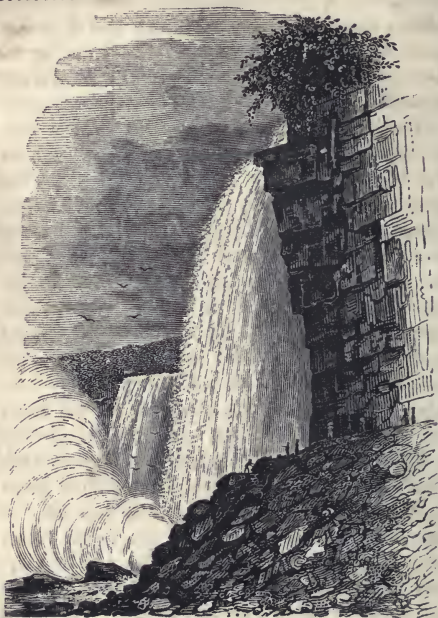
From these displays of beauty and wonder, retrace your steps to the Biddle Stair-case, and,

leaving that behind you, pass on to the Central Fall. If not in too much haste, descend the sloping bank to the Lower Fishing-Rock — as a limestone mass, at the lowest point of the island-shore, is called, —from whence the best view of the American Fall is presented, that can be any where obtained, unless, perhaps, from the river directly in front of it. The whole beautiful cascade hangs like a flashing curtain of shifting snow-wreaths before you, waving in fleecy folds, and pillared by downy columns of the softest, clearest white ; around and over all of which, a genial glory seems to float, bright and pure as the hope and faith of an angel-choir. The scene is lovely beyond all conception. Nothing on earth can compare in that respect with the American Fall, as seen from this spot. Vast as it is, you do not observe its size ; lofty as it is, you take no note of its height ; august as it is, you scarcely perceive its grandeur ; —its surpassing loveliness, and transcendant beauty, alone seem to engage your attention. Finally, however, all these become blended together, and you begin to realize the majesty, as well as the loveliness ; the sublimity, as well as the beauty of this incomparable cascade, and to feel that the power as well as the goodness of the Divine Architect, has here its

lasting and visible impress. Long will that glorious scene live in your memory, hallowed by the recollection of a holy rapture, and an earnest worship.

Reascend the sloping bank to the Central Fall, and the Cave of the Winds is before you. At the entrance, you pause to look up at the projecting cliff, and the sparkling torrent that shoots off far above, falling far over, and far below you; and down at the piles of rock heaped up around, and the foam and spray springing to light and loveliness from the rock-wave concussion. The mightiest throes give birth to the most beautiful things; and thus the rainbow was born of the deluge.

You are on the steps descending into the cavern. The majesty, the sublimity of the scene cannot escape your notice, and you will feel what I find it impossible to express. A wall of rock rises frowning on one side; the falling sheet arches the other. You see it leap from the cliff far above, and lash the rocks far below. You seem between two eternities, with a great mystery before you, whose secrets are about to be revealed. What a moment is this! From the vast cavern in to which you are passing, comes the sound of a thousand storms. You hear the mad winds raging around the walls of their



ENTRANCE TO CAVE OF THE WINDS.

imprisonment, and mingling their fearful roar with the reverberating thunders of the cataract!

The spray falls thick around you, and, almost overpowered with intense emotion, you hasten on, descend the steps, reach the bottom, instinctively retire from the rushing waters, and, having gained the centre and back of the cave, pause to look around. You seem all eyes, all ears, all soul ! You are in the sublime sanctuary of Nature ; her wonderful and fearful mysteries are above, beneath, and around you. God is Infinite, you are nothing ! this is His temple, you are His worshipper ! It is impossible in such a place to be irreverent. The proudest, here is meek ; the haughtiest, humble ; and the loftiest, lowly. The sights and sounds that crowd upon your gaze, and fill your ears, will be remembered to the latest day of your life ; nor will the emotions that swell your bosom, and thrill your very soul, be ever forgotten.

The Cave of the Winds has long been known, and by that name, than which none can be more appropriate. In 1834 it was first entered by Messrs. White and Sims, residents of the village, who landed from a boat at the foot of Prospect Island, and from thence effected an entrance, though with much difficulty. Since that time, it has been occasionally penetrated by the same approach ; but it was not until the present season that a safe and easy passage was thrown open to

the traveller ; and for this advantage the public is indebted to the liberality and enterprise of Judge Porter. It is now free to all who choose to explore its solemn shades.

This cave has sometimes been called "Ingraham's Cave," but the propriety of that name is very questionable ; and even were it not, the gentleman most interested in the subject, "solemnly protests" against it. The appellation by which it is generally known, "Cave of the Winds," is much more suitable, and this name it will beyond all doubt retain. It is about one hundred feet wide, thirty feet deep, and over one hundred and thirty feet high. The bottom is composed of loose stones or shale, which have fallen from above, and slopes gradually down to the front, where it terminates in a precipice thirty-four feet high, from the water's edge. The sheet of water on one side, and the projecting rock on the other, form a natural and noble arch, combining every element of sublimity. The thick spray rolls along the floor, curls up the arching wall, and flies across the ceiling in ceaseless revolutions, keeping the air in constant agitation, and adding the roar of many winds to the echoing thunders of the cataract. It is a sublime, an awful place — fit temple of Jehovah ! No language can describe, no

tongue express, and no pen record the solemnity, the grandeur, the sublimity of the scene, or the emotions which it excites.

Between the Central and American Falls, and at the foot of Prospect Island, there is a narrow vacant space, bounded and almost over-arched by the tumbling torrent, from which grand views are presented of these two cascades — that of the latter, is particularly fine. Here you may rest yourself, or ramble over the huge rocks, in the pure air, with the bright river and the blessed sky before you, and the dark rock above; and then pass under the American sheet as far as you desire, or dare. It is a frightful place, overwhelming in its gloom, grandeur, and sublimity; and there be few who have ventured far, though it is supposed possible to pass quite through and under the whole vast cascade. Returning hence, ascend the Biddle Stair-case, to the bank above, and resume your ordinary dress. Rest yourself here a short time, and then, proceeding up the river, make the circuit of the Island. Feast your eyes again as you pass the Horse-shoe Fall, upon its wondrous majesty, and beauty; take another look, if you desire it, from the Terrapin Rocks, Tower, and Bridge; and, re-ascending the bank, continue your walk along the wave-washed shore.

A short distance above the cataract, you will see where the Island has been much worn away by the action and encroachment of the river. The road once passed some rods to the right of where it now is, and has been cut off, as you will perceive, by the ever-wasting flood. Large trees, which grew not long since upon the firm earth of the Island, lie prostrate, with their branching tops in the deep stream, and their roots high upon the sloping shore. From the bank, here you have a splendid view of the rapids, and will observe the mighty torrent rolling down immense ledges, leaping and surging up high in the air, and wildly rushing and tossing about—a mad sea of commotion!

You will also observe part of the wreck of a large vessel lying in the stream nearly opposite this point. It is all that is now left of the Detroit, the flag ship of Capt. Barclay, which with other vessels, was captured in the naval victory achieved by Commodore Perry, on the 10th of September, 1813. It was brought down from Buffalo last season, to be sent over the Falls, but in passing the ledge above, was dismasted, and broken, and, disappointing the vast crowds collected to see it take the final plunge down the cataract, rested not far from where it now lies. Piece after piece has

been torn off and carried away by the impetuous torrent ; and, probably, by another spring, there will not be a fragment left of the noble vessel, that once sent its booming death-laden thunders over the trembling waves of Lake Erie, in a glorious strife for conquest and renown. But louder thunders than were ever its own, and a mightier strife than that in which it was engaged, accompany and cause its destruction. Fit end to its war-born existence !

A few rods further, and you come to a cluster of islands situated in the midst of the rapids which rage above, between, and around them. There are four of these Islands, though to appearance, but three. The nearest one is called Moss Island, from the quantities of moss that completely cover it, to a depth of from ten to fifteen inches. Between this and Iris Island, there is a beautiful cascade — a cataract in miniature — which affords one of the finest bathing places that could be wished. The outer islands are called the “Three Sisters,” and are, as yet, inaccessible, though they might be, at a small expense, connected with each other, and with Iris Island, and would be desirable places of resort, from their seclusion, and the magnificent views they would present of the rapids, in which they lie.

At the head of Iris Island, you see the broad river spread out before you, like a shining sea ; with Schlosser on the left, Chippewa far off to the right, and Grand, Navy, and other Islands in the dim distance above. It was here, and near the old log upon which you are probably now sitting, that visitors to Iris Island were landed from boats, before the bridge was built. Such was then the only mode of reaching it, and the passage required great care, skill, and exertion, and was of course expensive. The Island was therefore, at that time, a *terra incognita* to most persons — an unattainable object of intense desire. They could see that it was beautiful, that it presented grand views of the sublime cataract they had come from afar to behold ; but alas ! they could not set foot upon its velvet surface, repose beneath its shady groves, nor witness from its banks the marvellous glories that clustered around it, and in the midst of which it so sweetly slumbered. Happy traveller ! you can pass on and off when you please, see all that it has to reveal, and ramble over and about it at your leisure. Visitors to the Falls now, enjoy advantages that would have been deemed visionary and impracticable in those days of infant or unborn enterprise.

Continuing your walk around the Island, you

mark the commencement, progress, and wild violence of the American rapids, and accord them the meed of wonder and praise. At length you reach an old log house, with a low stone addition to the rear, now lone, dreary, and deserted. It was



here that Francis Abbot, the Hermit of the Falls, for a long time resided : — of this singular and unfortunate individual, we shall elsewhere relate all that is certainly known.

On an elevated sandy part of the bank, about midway of the garden, there were formerly a number of small mounds, into which excavations were made, some years since, and human remains discovered. They had been buried in a sitting posture, and each individual had a separate grave. None of the skeletons were found perfect, and most of the bones crumbled to dust, on being exposed to the air, or coming in contact with the touch. No relics of weapons or ornaments were observed, and probably none had ever been deposited.

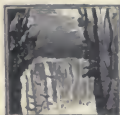
The memory of the age in which these people lived or perished, has passed away, and tradition is silent concerning their history or fate. That Niagara was held in a great degree sacred by the Aborigines is certain ; and that some of them believed the home of the Great Spirit to be here, is unquestioned. Probably, Iris Island was, from these circumstances, a consecrated spot, where great and good men, who were loved and honoured while living, were permitted to repose when dead ; and where also, the fair and innocent, who were cut down in the greenness of youth, and the bloom of beauty, were allowed to bear them company. But this is mere supposition, for nothing is or can be known of the persons here buried, or the time of their interment, except that it must have been ages ago. This is proved, by the condition of the bones, and the ignorance of all the neighbouring Indian tribes upon the subject. It is quite likely that the remains of many others are still resting in this holy burial-place, whose solemn dirge is sung by the cataract, and whose quiet sleep will be broken only by the Archangel's trump, at the end of time.

Having made the circuit of the Island, return to your hotel, dine, rest, and then pay a visit to the neighbouring dominions of the British Queen.

CHAPTER V.

FERRY STAIRS—CATLIN'S CAVE—GIANT CAVE—VIEW FROM THE RIVER—ROAD UP THE BANK—GRAND VIEW OF THE FALLS—VIEW FROM TABLE ROCK—TABLE ROCK—DISRUPTIONS—VARIED APPEARANCE OF THE FALL—STARKEY'S ROOMS—STAIRCASE—VIEW FROM BELOW—TERMINATION ROCK—MUSEUM—CAM. OBSCU.—IRIS ISLAND AT NIGHT.

“Not in the pomp of temples made with hands,
Nor where in pride the sculptured marble stands—
Where pillared aisles their laboured lines display,
And painted casements mock the imprisoned day,
Or the broad column swells—we worship Thee,
Spirit Almighty!—but in this vast shrine,
Where Nature bids her elder glories shine,
Fit emblems of thine own eternity.
Lonely, and wild, and vast! O, is not here
A temple meet for worship?”



HAVING refreshed yourself by rest and food, you set out on a visit to Canada, to see the magnificent and sublime views of the Falls, which that side alone presents. At Prospect Point again delight your eyes with the glorious scene that first met your gaze, and then pass on to the Ferry Stair-case, which you descend. It would seem almost impossible, without this convenience, to get down the precipice; but the feat has been accomplished in several instances,

by both gentlemen and ladies. The passage was, however, exceedingly difficult and dangerous, and the public is much indebted to Judge Porter for the present safe and commodious means of descent. These stairs were erected by that gentleman, in 1825, who has also the right of ferry below. From the foot of the first or upper flight of steps, an interesting view of the Falls is presented, which cannot fail to exact a tribute of admiration. From the bottom of the Stairs, pass up along the sloping bank, to the American Fall, of which you have an excellent view ; and where, if the wind is up the river, you may creep down the rocks, and pass some distance under the sheet, without being much incommoded by the spray.

Two caves were discovered in 1825, by a Mr. Catlin of Lockport, one of which bears his name, and is unique. They are about three-fourths of a mile below the ferry, at the base of the cliff. The passage to them is from the foot of the ferry staircase, and along the top of the sloping bank at the bottom of the precipice ; and, though not very dangerous, is quite rough and fatiguing. You can go by water with less exertion, but at some expense. The principal cave, and that which is by far the most curious, is a round hollow in the centre of a large and nearly spherical rock, formed

by a deposite of calcarious tufa, from the drippings of lime-water springs, which gush out of the rocks in several places at and near the cave. The cavity is about six feet in diameter, and may be entered by a circular aperture, scarcely large enough to admit a medium sized man ; — this opening is about four feet from the bottom of the rock. When first discovered, the cave was lined with stalactites, many of them very beautiful ; but they have all been long since removed. A fine spring sparkles along the bottom of the cavity.

The other cave, sometimes called the Giant Cave, is beyond, though near Catlin's, and some distance above it in the rocks ; by the disruption of large masses of which it is supposed to have been formed. It is somewhat difficult of access, but will repay the toil of climbing. A large niche in the precipice shelters the entrance to it, and a lovely spring ripples over its limestone floor. Mineral specimens, some very fine, may be picked up in the vicinity of these caves, and among others, moss in every stage of petrification, which presents an extremely curious and interesting appearance, even to the unlearned in the science of stones and fossils. A visit to these caves, will amply reward the trouble of getting to them ; but they should not be examined to the

exclusion of any view of the cataract, or of other and more remarkable scenes and objects hereafter to be noted, as they are of comparatively small importance. They are mentioned in this connection, because the route to them commences from the ferry stairs; and now, whenever you choose to go and see them, you will know whence to start, and what direction to pursue.

Returning from the American Fall to the Stairs, and winding down the sloping bank, you are soon at the Landing. The ferry on this side is kept by Mr. S. L. Ware, who takes every pains to oblige and accommodate visitors, and whose observatory at the head of the stairs, we have before had occasion to notice. The boats used for ferriage are large, staunch, and commodious, and are propelled by the sinewy arms of a single person. Not the slightest danger is to be apprehended, and the passage is effected in from four to seven minutes, — the distance across being seventy-six rods. The charge is reasonable: only eighteen and three-fourths cents from May to November, or twenty-five cents from November to May.

Taking your seat in the stern of the boat, the ferry-man pushes off, and you are afloat on the bosom of the abyss. The eddies curl around you, and the currents are swift; but the strong limbs

of the sturdy rower force the bark along with rapidity, and almost before you are aware of it, you find yourself in the middle of the stream, and the boat riding gracefully over the heavy swells. What a scene now courts your eager gaze ! The mighty cataract in all its sublimity and immensity is above and before you !

You are in the nave of a vast temple, whose walls are the eternal hills, corniced with crags, ornamented with a fret-work of trees, shrubs, flowers, and foliage ; whose dome is the blue heaven ; and whose altar is the mighty cataract, draped with hangings of green and snow ; from the unseen base of which clouds of incense are ascending to the skies, and bearing up the solemn peal of its mist-hidden thunder-toned organ. The floor is of emerald and alabaster ; elements are the ministers, and you a worshipper. This temple was the work of Nature, and to the God of Nature erected. Human hands could not lift even a corner of its veil ; human art could not equal the smallest of its marvels ; human eyes could not penetrate the least of its mysteries !

A vast semicircle of cataracts stretches around you, forming a scene of surpassing splendor and sublimity. Huge and massy walls of rock are on either side, and the shivering skiff in which you

sit, floats upon the surface of a sea, fathomless, convulsed, and immeasurable. Endless torrents, bursting as it were from the opened heavens, leap from the brow of the tremendous precipice, plunge headlong down the terrific height, and lash the deep profound, in to which they are hurled, to foam and madness. The sonorous breathings of the tortured abyss roll up and reverberate in thunder-peals; and air and earth tremble at the shock of the contending floods. Dense clouds of spray, rolling and curling up in shapeless and ever-varying forms, conceal the meeting of the waters, and majestically soar aloft, heaven-borne on the wings of the wind. The sun, shedding refulgent splendors upon the glorious scene, seems girdled with a radiant halo by the rising mists; and rainbows, broken into fragments by the shifting vapours, appear and vanish, dazzle and dissolve, on every side, in quick and magic succession.

Lost in the contemplation of such sublimity and magnificence, the moments fly unnoted, and the Landing is before you, where the red-vestured sentinels of Queen Victoria are seen pacing back and forth their accustomed promenade. If an American, you will probably endeavour to convey by your appearance and looks, a very definite idea of your Nation's independence, — if a Briton, your

stature will no doubt increase a full inch. At all events, you will pass on up the bank, by a fine carriage-road, which was constructed, at a cost of about five thousand dollars, by Messrs. Street and Clarke, and completed in the year 1827. In return for the expense incurred, by the formation of this road, the government of Upper Canada gave those gentlemen the sole right of ferry for twenty-one years. It is a very smooth and pleasant way, and the ascent is quite gradual.

From the top of the bank, and along it toward Table Rock, but at no one particular point, the best and grandest of all upper views of the Falls is presented. The eye here, grasps at a glance, the whole mighty measure of the cataract; and Niagara in all its beauty and glory, in all its majesty and immensity, is spanned by a single look. It is before you, revealed in all its grandeur and extent, in all its splendor and sublimity. You stand entranced and spell-bound. Amazement and admiration are in your gaze; awe and reverence in your soul. It is a scene to linger on, and long you linger, turning often away to rest the eye, and relieve the mind, and as often recurring to it with increased wonder and interest. But at length, you pass on, with it still in your eye and mind, to Table Rock; which, passing the Camera

Obscura, and the Museum, at length you reach. The view of the Horse-shoe Fall from this point, is indeed magnificent.

No wonder that the scene from Table Rock has been lauded and extolled. No wonder that it has been the *ultima thule* of many a long and weary pilgrimage. It is all that has been said of it, and infinitely more : — words cannot convey an idea of its unearthly sublimity and grandeur. The sea of rapids leaping and tossing above ; the vast breadth and depth of the raging stream ; the impetuous rush of the ocean-torrent ; the awful plunge of the prodigious volume ; the tremendous concussion, heard and felt, but not seen from the covering mists, that envelope and hide the crushing appulsion of the meeting masses ; the pointed spear-shaped jets that shoot far up from the convulsed bosom of the heaving and surging abyss ; the multitudinous whirling, shifting, convolving clouds of spray and vapour, that roll heavily up and load the unresting air ; the dark, threatening cliffs, that shut in the vexed and foam-covered accumulation of floods, in the angry gulf below ; the resplendant glories shed over all by the burning sun, tinting with gorgeous colours the sheet, the stream, and the spray, wreathing with rainbow-hues the fleecy and emerald robes of the

grand cascade, and arching the fearful chasm with a zone of brightness and beauty ; the wild hoarse roar of the mad rapids, and the deep booming thunders of the cloud-compelling cataract — these, and a thousand other collateral and subordinate features, combine to form a scene which appals and confounds the observer, while it attracts and rivets his wrapt and eager gaze. God of Omnipotence ! this wonder is Thy work ; the very ground is holy with Thy presence ! This you feel—must feel—though, perhaps, you do not speak it. Crowding emotions swell the bosom ; thoughts that defy utterance, fill the mind. The power and presence of the Almighty seem fearfully manifest. You gaze, and tremble as you gaze !

Table Rock is on the same level with the Fall, and is a continuation of the ledge or strata from which the torrent-flood is precipitated. It projects over the bank, and beyond the curve of the cascade to a considerable distance, and from this circumstance, derives its name ; having, in some respects, a tabular aspect. Creep to the edge and look down, — the sensation is awful. There is nothing but the invisible and imponderable air between the thin leaf-like crag which supports you, and the massy blocks of limestone that lay



TABLE ROCK FROM BELOW.

coacervated more than one hundred feet beneath, where they have fallen from the dizzy elevation whence you look, and been rent and scattered by the shock. There is a strange and indefinable fascination in the terrible depth that confronts you,

“Charming the eye with dread ;”

and it requires an effort to withdraw from that horrible verge of danger and death.

Table Rock was formerly of much greater extent than it is at present ; large portions of the cliff having at different times been broken off, and dashed to pieces by the fall. In 1818, an immense mass, — one hundred and sixty feet in length, and from thirty to forty feet broad, — was torn from the brow of the bank, hurled down the steep, and shattered to fragments at the foot of the precipice. The disruption took place about midnight, and the shock of its fall startled and awoke the inhabitants for miles around, by whom it was mistaken for that of an earthquake. In the years 1828 and '29, other smaller portions of the rock fell ; and a deep fissure, which cannot but be observed, embracing within its circumference an enormous mass of rock, shows that at no very distant date a similar catastrophe may be expected.

The old building and machinery upon Table

Rock, were erected for the purpose of forcing water up the high bank to the City of the Falls, for domestic and other uses. The project was found to be impracticable, and was therefore abandoned.

The shape or outline of the British Fall, is undergoing almost constant change, from the disruption of large portions of the ledge or cliff, by which it is produced.* In 1678 it was nearly straight across. Since that time, it has become deeply indented, and has at different periods, taken different forms of curvature, from one of which, it derived the name of Horse-shoe.

It is worthy of note that the outline of this cascade assumes a different shape to the eye, at every point from which it is seen.† Consequently, it is presented in a new and striking aspect at every change of place; and as many fine views are obtained as there are separate stations from which to observe. From the Clifton House, the Pavilion Hotel, and the Barracks, it appears under forms having but slight similitude to each other,

* In 1828 several large pieces fell, one of them nearly half an acre in extent.

† The same is true, though in a less degree, of the American Fall.





VIEW FROM ABOVE TABLE ROCK, CANADA SIDE.

—varying from concave to square, and from square to triangular, — but all extremely interesting ; — the view from the former is, however, immeasurably the most grand and superb.

After having sufficiently examined and admired the scene from Table Rock, you return along the plank pathway to the rooms of Mr. Starkey, where there is a Stair-case down the bank, and where you will procure proper apparel and a guide to Termination Rock, which is behind the great sheet. Provided with these essential requisites, you descend a long flight of spiral stairs, erected some years since by Mr. Forsyth, from the foot of which, taking the path to the right, you soon arrive at the misty, spray-washed entrance to the cavern which it is your purpose to explore. Here you pause, to enjoy a most sublime view of the cataract, and particularly of the Horse-shoe Fall, which comes thundering down, above and before you, stretching far away to the left in its huge and awful proportions. Another, and, in some respects, a better view of the same grand spectacle, is seen from the river-margin, to which you descend.

From this point, more than any other, you appear to realize the vast height of the precipice, and the prodigious weight and impulsion of the torrent.

It seems a god-hurled flood, and you an insect-atom, scarce beyond its rush. Tremendous in its force, immense in its extent, appalling in its sublimity, the vast cascade confounds and terrifies you, while it hugs your gaze with a charm you can neither comprehend nor break. A dread indefinable divinity is in and upon it, which compels your adoration of Him who piled the rock, and heaved the flood that made Niagara, and made it speak of Him, through every sense of power and beauty, to mind and soul. There is a godness in the scene, that is felt in every fibre, but cannot be expressed, — that infinitely expands the soul, which is yet too small to grasp its dim outline even, — that crowds the mind with august thoughts and emotions, which struggle for utterance, but which the heart only can tell to its Creator in the silent eloquence of worship.

Of all views of Niagara, this is the most impressive ; and, were there no other, it would seem inexplicable from whence these unintermitted and immeasurable floods could proceed, which appear literally to fall from the heavens. From this scene, tearing yourself away, you regain the top of the sloping bank, and, impatient to attain the penetralia of Nature's hidden mysteries, essay the passage behind the sheet. The winds howl around

you ; — the spray dashes in your face with blinding and almost suffocating force. You can scarcely see, scarcely breathe ; but the supporting hand of the guide, and his encouraging voice, sustain and re-assure you. With hasty but careful steps you press on, and are in a moment more, at your journey's end, and can both see and breathe more freely. The spray still showers upon you, but with diminished force and density ; and you look around, above, below. What a fearful place ! what an imposing scene ! Unutterable awe is the first, and for some seconds, the only emotion.

You stand upon a narrow ledge, scarce three feet wide, and gaze with intense interest up ninety feet at the meeting arches of rock and water ; and down seventy feet at a steep precipice, and a flashing sheet, which are lost to view in the rising mists. You see the mighty torrent roll off the cliff above your head, and plunge with a lightning rapidity, down the dark profound. You cannot see the strife between fall and flood — the mad melee of many waters ; — but you hear the sound of the battling elements, and you feel that the struggle is terrific. Such sights ! such sounds ! — The eye aches ; the ear is pained. But there is a dreadful fascination in the place : — the eye looks

eagerly, though it aches; and the ear is pleased with that which pains it.

An inviting extent of cavern, dim, misty, and indefinable, is before you. You long to explore it, and advance a step, when the guide, catching your arm, assures you that you stand upon the extremity of Termination Rock, and that, though it is possible to make your way a few feet farther, the attempt would be at the hazard of your life. Reluctantly you abandon the hope of diving still deeper into the shadowy recesses of that terribly attractive cavern; and survey with a closer scrutiny the vaulted hall, in which you stand. Ragged, impending, and seamed with fissures, the arching rock above you appears to be on the point of crumbling beneath the weight of the superincumbent flood. Massy fragments, held by no visible support, seem almost in the act of falling; and you can hardly persuade yourself, that danger is not imminent, and destruction at hand. But the reflection, that thousands and thousands of persons have passed under them, back and forth, with impunity, inspires you with courage; and you scan, but with a throbbing pulse and a heaving bosom, the wonders and glories by which you are surrounded.

The living deluge that bursts from the trembling

crag far above you, and, flashing by, is scarcely seen, ere it thunders up from the gulf below, seems to make an eternal present of both past and future, by its lightning rush and ceaseless flow. Omnipotence mingling infinities, dashing down the flood, lifting the spray, and swelling the sound, pervades the place with His presence, and deepens the awe it inspires. But any attempt to describe the sights, sounds, or sensations, produced by this transcendent scene, must be vain, and worse than vain; and I leave you "amid these vast and eternal workings of gigantic nature," to commune with Him, "whom Nature's self obeys," and remain or emerge at will.

Drenched and dripping, you at last come forth, bearing upon your mind and memory, an impression that no time or change can ever erase; and with solemn step and thoughtful mien, ascend the stairs, and resume your ordinary dress. Register your name, receive a certificate that you have been to Termination Rock, pay the customary charge, and then, if you choose, rest yourself, and partake of some refreshment. Mr. Starkey, who keeps this establishment, is attentive to the wishes of his guests, and has a fine cabinet of minerals and other curiosities, which is worthy of notice.

Returning to the ferry, stop at the Museum as

you pass, and examine Mr. Barnett's admirable collection of natural and artificial curiosities. A splendid view of the Falls may also be enjoyed from the piazza of the Museum; and Mr. Barnett, who is both intelligent and polite, will do all in his power to render your visit agreeable. At the Camera Obscura, make a short pause, to see the miniature and moving Niagara, animated and life-like, which that instrument presents.

From thence, return to the ferry, — which, on the Canada side, is kept by Mr. Shultersburgh, a civil and obliging man, careful and attentive to his business, and experienced in all that relates to his vocation, — and, while crossing the river, enjoy again the glorious view of basin, cliff, and cataract, in that solemn temple, which seems filled with the Eternal presence, its liquid floor quaking beneath His Omnipotent tread. From this sublime sanctuary, having offered up the incense of an awe-awakened praise to Him whose habitation if on earth, is here, — return to your hotel, recruit your physical energies with rest and food, and ponder upon the mighty and magnificent scenes you have beheld.

In the evening, make another visit to Iris Island, which you will find even more interesting and agreeable in the sweet moonlight, than in the

broad glare of day, — and catch, if you can, a glimpse of the lunar bow. There is a witching loveliness about this island in the soft obscurity of evening, that cannot fail to please ; and a solemn grandeur in the cataract at night, that commands reverence. Then, too, imagination holds her undisputed sway ; — but the half-concealment that shrouds every object, confines her to the task of filling up the shadowy outline of the vast indistinct, that is every where around. It seems a spirit-land, and gigantic forms of inessential grace and beauty float before the vision, upon the atmosphere of fancy. Hushed is the voice of mirth, silent the tongue of conviviality. The Actual blends with the Ideal ; contemplation rules the hour, and the place ; and a subdued, but not dismal, melancholy pervades every brow and bosom. No sound is heard, but the choral chaunt of the elements ; no sentiment breathed, but such as befits the spot, and the season. The Genius of Niagara, hovering near, spreads his misty pinions over all things ; and the whole scene is hallowed by the invisible presence of Deity.

End the day by reflecting upon what you have seen and felt ; and looking over your GUIDE-BOOK, to determine where you will go next. And so, good night ; — I know your slumbers will be sweet.

CHAPTER VI.

REMARKS AND ADVICE—GOOD COUNSEL—PUBLIC GARDEN—
ROAD DOWN THE BANK—INDIAN LADDER—POINT VIEW—
MINERAL SPRING—VIEW OF THE CATARACT—WHIRLPOOL
RAPIDS—WHIRLPOOL LODGE—WHIRLPOOL—BODIES—DE-
SCENT—VARIED ASPECT—RAFT IN THE WHIRLPOOL—
DEVIL'S HOLE—HEWLETT'S CELLAR—LEWISTON HEIGHTS.

"It seemed some mountain, rent and riven,
A channel for the stream had given;
So high the cliffs of limestone gray,
Hung beetling o'er the torrent's way,
Yielding, along their rugged base,
A flinty footpath's niggard space,
Where he who winds 'twixt rock and wave,
May hear the headlong torrent rave,
And chafe, in madness and in pride,
'Gainst rocks that wall its prisoned tide."



YOU HAVE now seen the Falls from the principal points of observation, and the beautiful scenery immediately around them. If you remain any time, and you should for several days at least; you will view them again and again, and find them grow in your estimation at every succeeding visit. People who come to see the Falls, run hurriedly around them for a few hours, and then away, can form little idea of their real magnitude and sublimity. Those

who remain longest, invariably admire them most. It requires time to realize their wonderful beauty and grandeur. There is so much to observe, that the mind becomes confused, and cannot, but upon repeated examination form a correct judgement.

Besides the cataract itself, there are various objects in the vicinity, which you will desire to see, and which few are content to forego the pleasure of beholding. To these I shall now direct your attention. I should advise you to pass down on the American side to Lewiston, and return on the Canada shore. You can, in this way, visit all the points of interest, with most economy of time and trouble. Conveyances are to be had on either side, upon reasonable terms ; and a line of Omnibuses run hourly from the village of Niagara Falls, to the Mineral Spring, Whirlpool, and Devil's Hole. But the walk along the bank of the river is most delightful, and views of beautiful and romantic scenery present themselves at almost every step. For females and invalids, it would perhaps be too fatiguing ; but many ladies walk to the Whirlpool, and all who can, are advised to do so. The scenery along the river bank is every where grand and picturesque, and no part of it should be lost, if it can be avoided.

A few rods below the American Fall is the

Public Garden of which we have before spoken ; where a beautiful summer-house, almost on the brow of the precipice, and commanding a noble view of the cataract, occupies the precise spot where Abbott, the Hermit of the Falls, for a long time lived, in a hut erected by himself.

About eighty rods further, and you come to an excavation, where a good deal of earth and stone has been removed. It is the commencement of a carriage-road down the bank, which was begun some fourteen or fifteen years ago, but soon after discontinued. In 1836, it was again commenced by Mr. Rathbun, and would have been soon completed, but for the unfortunate issue of his affairs.

Just below, there is a notch in the bank, near a fine spring, at which the Indian Ladder, as it was called, stood. This ladder, which was merely a large cedar tree, resting against the rock, was the most ancient means of descending to the base of the cliff, and thence attaining the foot of the cascade. The limbs, and a few notches cut into the trunk itself, were all there was to cling to ; and the last person known to have descended it, —a daring hunter, by the name of Brooks, who ventured down in pursuit of game, —fell before he reached the bottom, and suffered severe concussion.

Point View, so called from the splendid view of the chasm, river, and cataract, which it affords, is about three fourths of a mile below the ferry. Standing here, you can look directly down two hundred feet at the broad stream, flowing smoothly by, and at the towering banks by which it is environed. The view of the cataract, though distant is most magnificent, and one that you will not be likely soon to forget.

The Mineral Spring is about one and a fourth miles beyond Point View, a few rods from the river, and is sheltered and shaded by a pretty and graceful open building of Grecian architecture,



MINERAL SPRING.

erected by Mr. Rathbun. The water wells up between the rocks, and is collected in a stone basin ; — it is strongly impregnated with sulphur, contains also lime and magnesia, and is said to be

quite similar to that of Harrowgate, England. From the road, a short distance beyond this spring, the first view of the Falls is obtained by persons coming from the direction of Lockport or Lewiston. It is extremely beautiful, and is that with which Capt. Hall was so much pleased.

Some eighty or one hundred rods below the Mineral Spring, commence the Whirlpool rapids ; and from this point, to that singular phenomenon, every foot of the way possesses a strong and exciting interest. Walled in by those giant banks, from which it makes one dizzy to look down, the river, as if angered to fury by the restraint they impose upon it, rushes along wild, impetuous, and uncontrollable ; and pours its raging floods into that mad sea of agitation, the Maelstrom of Niagara.

The Whirlpool is three miles from the Falls, and about one hundred rods from the main road, where a house of entertainment, called the Whirlpool Lodge, has been erected by Mr. Wheeler, who is also proprietor of the grounds in rear, through which the visiter must pass. A small fee is paid here, for the privilege of entering these embowered walks, and for the use of the steps down the bank.

Having reached the American Cliff, upon whose

lofty brow a beautiful summer-house stands—another proof of the enterprise and taste of Mr. Rathbun—pause and behold:—the Whirlpool is before and far below you, spread out like a little sea, tossed and agitated, and shut in on every side by towering and tree-crowned banks. This vast basin is in form nearly circular, and has, beyond doubt, been hollowed out by the action of the water; probably, when the cataract in its upward progress from Lewiston heights, had reached this point, and for a time halted in its amazing march.

The river here, makes an acute angle in its course, turning abruptly off to the right, behind the cliff upon which you stand. The furious torrent comes thundering and foaming into this great basin; and its currents, kept away from the place of egress by the mighty rocks upon which the cliff rests, are forced, by their prodigious impulsion, quite across the mouth of the outlet; and, meeting the opposite bank, are again diverted from their course; and, curving inward, are carried round and round the basin, till they are drawn down in the centre, driven subterraneously far forward, and finally ejected at the opening below, where they boil up, and bound away in frightful and tremendous plunges.

Nothing that has life, floats upon this chaos of

convulsions; but huge timbers, and sometimes dead bodies, are drawn into its vortex, and carried round in ceaseless gyrations for days, and even weeks, before they escape from its convolving currents, and whirling eddies. Two British soldiers, in attempting to desert, by swimming the river, were last season drowned, and hurried into the Whirlpool, where their swollen disfigured bodies remained for a number of days, objects of loathing and disgust, — now floating motionless along, and anon, with a horrible seeming animation, diving, emerging, leaping, and as it were, playing with the foaming surges, and conflicting waves.

From the height whereon you stand, but little of the terrible agitation, and wild intumescence of the Whirlpool, can be perceived by the unassisted eye. The little sticks — as they appear to be — which you observe whirling and tossing about, are in reality, large pieces of timber; as by the aid of an object glass, you will become convinced; and be also enabled to realize something more of the grandeur and commotion of this strange and fearful sea of imprisoned, but rebellious and still raging floods.

By a long and tortuous declivity of rude steps, you descend to the base of the cliff, and from the

level rocks below, observe the wild rush and whirl of the mad waters. The rapids above, and at the entrance of the Whirlpool, are terribly grand and striking. The huge surges leap and plunge with prodigious force and velocity ; and their impulsion is so great, that the whole mass is heaved up at the centre of this mighty maelstrom, to an elevation of not less than twelve feet above its outer surface.

Passing round to the right, you come to the outlet of this tumultuous sea, and behold a scene of surpassing grandeur. Two black and frowning cliffs, scarcely thirty rods apart, rear their huge and giant forms to a height of nearly three hundred feet ; and there stand, terrible and impending — the mountain-sized, rock-armed guardians of this maelstrom-portal. The escaping torrents, crowding through the narrow passage, and hurrying down the slope, rush forward with such inconceivable rapidity and force, that the middle of the gushing volume is raised much higher than the side next you, which is smooth and glassy, but incredibly swift ; and the bounding surges leap away in sublime plunges of eight to ten feet high. These rapids are seen to much better advantage from the opposite side, as they are nearest to that shore, and indeed dash along the huge rocks by

which it is lined, in their curvetting and uncontrollable course.

Nothing that comes down the river, can escape being drawn into the Whirlpool, as the current is carried quite across the outlet, and turned up by the opposing bank. Wave urges wave, current accelerates current, billow chases billow, and there they revolve round and round, till, swallowed in one place, ejected in another, contending here, and separating there, parting, reposing, meeting, mingling, eddying, plunging, they are at last engorged in the deep bowels of the abyss, forced far under the superincumbent mass, and finally vomited forth at the narrow outlet, whence they hasten away in the mad rapture of new-found freedom, to seek repose in the quiet bosom of the distant lake.

It is utterly impossible to describe the Whirlpool, so as to give any adequate idea of its grandeur and sublimity. Beauty it has none, — it is fearful — terrible ! There is not a winning feature about it. It is solemn, awful, impressive ; and, as a great natural curiosity, second only to the mighty cataract of Niagara.

A visit to the Whirlpool should never be omitted. It is in all respects, totally different from every thing about the Falls. A vast unity of

factions and warring energies, shut in and imprisoned by massy and cloud-reaching barriers, having no relation or likeness to aught else in the material world ; it is alone in its solemn strangeness, and touches no chord of human sympathy. The only emotions it excites, are unmitigated astonishment, and inexplicable awe ; — such, at least, was its effect upon the writer.

The same cause that makes the waters in the basin below the Falls, rise sometimes so quickly, and to such a height, — contraction of the channel — produces a similar effect in this. A heavy wind down the lake, raising the river one or two feet, causes it to rise there, from fifteen to twenty feet, and in the Whirlpool to nearly the same height. At such a time, when it has received the tribute of destruction ; and planks, timbers, trees, and it may be boats, and dead bodies, are caught and enveloped in its tremendous toils, it is seen in its most sublime and awful aspect, and seems, in its wild delight, a living but imprisoned desolation, sporting with, while it rends its prey, and yet wearing a savage solemnity of countenance, in the highest degree hideous and appalling. At a lower stage of water, its currents, cavities, eddies, and gyrations, are more distinctly marked, and the view though less striking, is perhaps more

impressive. Seen at any time, and seen aright, it cannot fail to excite astonishment, and fill the soul with awe.

A large raft of timber escaped a few years since, from its fastenings above the Falls, and was precipitated over the cataract. The disjoined logs were speedily hurried to the Whirlpool, in which they remained for a number of weeks. It then presented a scene, as those who beheld it relate, of intense and startling interest. Scattered about in every direction, they were to be seen in all attitudes, and from listless inanity, to a wonderful life-likeness. Some were floating on the glassy surface, others riding the gentle swells, some careering over the rolling billows, and again others leaping, wrestling, crashing, plunging, flying, following, retreating, pursuing, shooting up high in the air, diving far down in the deep, hiding here, and starting up there, as if a mad forest of trees, riding these infernal surges, held here a wild inebriate revel ; — or rather, as if the mob of waters, seizing these immense weapons, waged intestine war, and fought one another, — flood threshing flood, and surge goading surge with these Titanic war-clubs, now mingling in the horrid melee of strife, now thrown far apart, and again rushing together, implacable, vindictive,

and unrelenting. It must have been a strange and fearful scene !

Enormous blocks of limestone lie scattered and coacervated at the foot of those two tremendous cliffs, showing that a wilder warfare than that of contending currents, has been here at some time waged — a war of elements, a contest between rock and flood, — the mighty cataract and the eternal hills being parties in the strife. The strait is much narrower at this point, than at any other of its whole course ; and the place seems, from this circumstance, the best adapted for the construction of a suspension bridge. Who will give himself to wealth and fame by the erection of so desirable a work ?

Half a mile below the Whirlpool, there is a deep, dark cove, or chasm, in the rocky bank, called the Devil's Hole, which, from its own gloomy grandeur, and the historical associations connected with it, is an object of no inconsiderable interest, and of much resort. One of the most wild, rugged, high, and massy cliffs in the world, rises above it, bleak, bare and projecting, from which a noble view of the river and gulf is presented. A stream, called Bloody Run, usually small, and often dry, in the summer, but swoln to a torrent size in the fall and spring, pours its

dark waters down this fearful chasm, and over the vast rocks that form its bed, to the river below.



DEVIL'S HOLE FROM BELOW.

The road passes close by this cove, or hole, and an old saw-mill stands upon the brink of the precipice.

By a long, tedious, difficult, but not dangerous route, starting from the top of the bank, about

twenty rods below the Devil's Hole,* winding your way down and around the precipice, you descend into this frightful gulf, clamber down and over huge moss-covered rocks, fallen trees, and accumulated rubbish, that almost bar the passage, and toil on to the river side. Unless you do this, you can form but a very faint and imperfect conception of the wild and savage grandeur of the place, into whose dark rock-shut, forest-hidden recesses not a ray of sunlight has ever forced its way. An air of sullen sublimity pervades its gloom; and when in its shadowy depths, you seem cut off from the world, and confined in the prison-house of terror. It is akin to the cataract and the whirlpool, in the awe it inspires; but has not a single feature in common with the one or the other. It is a wild, dark, savage, gloomy cavern; and its exploration should not be omitted. To appearances, it is a fit place for a demon-dwelling; and hence, probably, derives its name. It is memorable as the scene of a tragic event, elsewhere to be narrated, which occurred during the old French war, and was of a strange and bloody character.

* The remains of an old flight of steps are still at the Devil's Hole, but so much broken and decayed as to be unserviceable.

From a hill, not far hence, an extensive and splendid prospect opens to the view. You can see Queenston Heights, Brock's Monument, the plains and villages below, the whole remaining course of the river, the American and English forts, the spreading lake, and the far off hills and forests fading away in the distance beyond. There is hardly in the world, a more beautiful and picturesque landscape, than is here presented to your observation; nor one which exhibits a greater variety of interesting and pleasing objects.

About two and a half, or perhaps, three miles from the Devil's Hole, there is a singular cavity in the rock, some ten or fifteen feet below the top of the bank, which is worth examination, and is known by the name of Hewlett's Cellar. It is of a triangular shape, as regards both its level and altitude — pointed at the top and back. The walls and floor are of solid limestone, and it appears to have been formed by the breaking out of two immense pieces of rock: — how this could have been done, seems from the shape and situation of the cave, almost inexplicable.

Less than a mile from this cave, terminates abruptly the mountain-plain, through which Niagara has cut its deep and devious channel, for more than two leagues; and the gorge from which the

river here emerges, presents a grand and striking aspect. Rising on either side, to a height of nearly four hundred feet, the steep banks stand like huge and solemn sentinels, guarding the narrow gateway—their tree-crowned summits nodding defiance to all below. The view from the heights is very comprehensive in its extent, embracing plains, villages, river, forts, and lake; and a broad prospect still beyond, bounded only by, and blending with the distant horizon. Descending the heights, you are soon at Lewiston, which lies in the valley just below.

If you have taken our advice, and walked from the Falls, along the bank of the river to this place, you will probably spend the night here, and pass up, on the opposite side, in the morning. If, on the contrary, you come by carriage conveyance, you will have time to dine, and return to the Falls on the other shore; or to visit Fort Niagara, and get back before dark. In any event, you will patronize 'mine host' of the Frontier House—a portly rosy-looking, good-humoured scion of the 'fast-anchored isle,' who is specially recommended, and who will take every pains to recommend himself, to your favour. I leave you to your good cheer, and a sweet repose. *Bon soir* ———.

CHAPTER VII.

QUEENSTON HEIGHTS—BROCK'S MONUMENT—BLOWN UP—
COVE OR CHASM—WHIRLPOOL—BENCACKIE POINT—VIEW
FROM—MUDDY RUN—CASCADE—BANK OPPOSITE—BEN-
DER'S CAVE—IMPROVEMENTS—CHANNEL—LUNDY'S LANE
—STREET'S POINT—BURNING SPRING—BRIDGEWATER—
CHIPPEWA—BATTLE-GROUND—CONCLUDING REMARKS.

"The bale-fires flash on high, from rock to rock—
Death rides upon the sulphury Siroc—
Red Battle stamps his foot, and Nations feel the shock."

* * * * *

"Thy glories are sought till the life-throb is o'er—
Thy laurels pursued though they blossom in gore.
'Mid the ruins of columns, and temples sublime,
The arch of the hero doth grapple with time :
The Muse o'er thy form throws her tissue divine,
And History her annal emblazons with thine."



LEAVING Lewiston, and cross-
ing the river in a boat, propelled by
horse power, you land in her Brit-
annic Majesty's dominions, at the
village of Queenston, and ascend
the heights, so memorable for one of the most
desperately-contested battles of the late war, in
which the American forces, finally lost a thrice-
won victory, and were compelled to lay down
their arms, and surrender at discretion ; and the
English sustained an irreparable loss in the death

of General Brock, which no victory could compensate. He was killed by a musket ball, in the early part of the action, while cheering on the brave troops under his command. When struck, he was standing by a cherry-tree, still pointed out, in an orchard to the right, at the foot of the mountain-plain.



FERRY AT LEWISTON.

From the heights at Queenston, a similar but less obstructed, and therefore, more extensive view of the country, river, and lake, is presented, to that of the opposite elevation. From the top of the monument, nearly five hundred feet above the river-level, it was still more grand and comprehensive ; but, considered as an observatory, that

towering structure is among the things that were, having been nearly demolished by an explosion of gunpowder.

This monument, standing upon the most lofty point of Queenston Heights, was erected by the Provincial Legislature, to the memory of General Brock, whose remains were removed from Fort George, and deposited in its vault, with those of his Aid, Colonel McDonald, who was mortally wounded in the same action, and died the following day. In addition to its value as a work of art, it had other and stronger claims to respect. It was erected in honour of a good and gallant man, whose name and deeds form a part of the history of the times; and whose uniformly kind treatment of American prisoners — so very different from that of too many of his contemporaries — will ever be held in grateful remembrance by the American people. Wantonly to destroy such a monument, raised in commemoration of such a man, would be base indeed; but there was not wanting some wretch, infamous and despicable enough to be guilty of the outrage.

On the night of the seventeenth of April, 1840, the monument was blown up by some villain, or villains, unknown, and completely ruined. The stairs were thrown down, the shaft rent in several



PRESERVE AND REPAIRMENT OF WASHINGTON MONUMENT.

places nearly from top to bottom, the inscription-tablet fractured quite across, the key-stone forced out, and the whole structure, in short, irremediably injured. The damage was at first supposed to be much less than the event proves it to have sustained. In February of the following year, a large portion of the top fell ; and now, the dome is entirely gone, the balustrade almost destroyed, and scarcely a single part unbroken. The interior is a literal heap of ruins, and the ground for many yards around, covered with the fallen fragments.

This execrable transaction, has been attributed to the notorious Benjamin Lett, — who is now in the penitentiary, for an attempt to blow up the steamer Great Britain, —but with what justice, we are unable to say. Whoever did it, richly deserves a short shrift and a strong halter ; and this we believe to be the sentiment of every generous mind. Any wretch, so depraved, as to war against the ashes and honours of the dead, is unfit to associate with the living.

From the heights of Queenston, passing along up the river bank, you come, when a short distance below, and nearly opposite the Devil's Hole, to a cove or gulf, something similar to that gloomy chasm, but of much less magnitude. It is

however, dark and romantic, and quite secluded, and may be worth exploring to the river ; a feat we have not yet, but intend soon, to accomplish.

About half a mile further, and you come again to the Whirlpool, of which, from the summit of the Canada Cliff, a capital view is afforded. The rapids entering this imprisoned sea, are almost directly in front ; and those at the outlet, immediately below you. The view, is in many respects, better than that from the height opposite.



OUTLET OF WHIRLPOOL, CANADA SIDE.

Descending a long and tortuous, but neither difficult nor dangerous succession of steps and

slopes, to the foot of the precipice, you find yourself on a ledge of rocks, with the Whirlpool on your right, and the mad rapids plunging impetuously past you, through the narrow opening. The scene, from this point, is inconceivably grand and impressive, and one you should not fail to witness. Turning to the right, and carefully picking your way along the margin of this mighty basin, you may make the circuit of the Whirlpool, and get a better idea of its wild and terrible sublimity, than can be otherwise obtained. It is a long, and somewhat fatiguing walk, but the toil will be richly rewarded. Of the entering rapids, — surpassing in grandeur, in proportion to the breadth of the stream, even those above the cataract — you will thus get a near and most splendid prospect.

Having re-ascended the bank, follow it round the Whirlpool, crossing large ravines, and passing deep and thickly-wooded dells, till you reach Bencackie Point, at the entrance to this maelstrom-wonder. Of all upper views of this vast sea of imprisoned waters, that presented to your look from this spot, is the most imposing and unique. The high-rolling rapids, rush along in savage grandeur, almost beneath your feet, but far, far below you ; and the whole measure of the monster

abyss, heaving, surging, and circling in its wild agitation, confronts your eager yet half-recoiling gaze. Opposite, rises the gigantic, cloud-soaring cliff, from which you first saw the Whirlpool, with the sweet summer-house resting like a snow-wreath on its emerald summit; and parted from it by the narrow outlet, through which the escaping floods are bounding away, in the joy of release, from the dark valley of their confinement, stands the huge form of its twin-born companion, rearing its mountain brow to an equal elevation, inviting, as it were, the tempests' shock, and defying the storms of time and fate.

You can watch the circling currents, the plunging surges, the gorging, and disgorging floods, see the entering and emerging torrents, and all the varied features of this strange, wild prison-place of raging waves; and if it does not impress you with a solemn awe, you must be less susceptible to strong emotions, than the many who behold and wonder at the scene, as we have often done. The sullen stillness, that seems to hover, pall-like, above this broad, deep basin; the black banks, that close darkly round, walling it in with massive, impenetrable, high-reaching barriers; the towering mountain-formed, dark-browed warders that guard its narrow portal; the wild floods rushing

in, and maddening at the toils by which they are enveloped ; the prisoned volumes, winding round and round the sombre slopes by which they are enclosed, and thus weaving coils by which still-coming currents are ensnared ; the mad contention that the struggling, jostling, angry masses meeting and battling, ever make ; the raging torrents, crowding and driving through the lean and slender gateway, that leads to freedom, — these and many other strange and august appearances, conspire to fill the mind with astonishment, and the soul with awe. I do not envy the man, who can look upon such a scene unmoved ; nor admire the apathy of his stoic gaze, who sees no dread in this sublime display, and feels no reverence for the Power that made its walls and waves. But, come —

A short distance above the Whirlpool, a small stream, called Muddy Run, a mere rivulet in its summer size, but increasing to a torrent force, when swoln by the falling rains and melting snows of autumn and spring, leaps down the lofty bank, and mingles its tiny volume with the heremad Niagara ; which, like a wilderness of raging floods, dashes along in a wild career of rapids, on to its maelstrom-prison. The cascade formed by this little stream, is beautiful and unique. The

water falls in a brilliant, sparkling shower of silver spangles, and, flashing off from the rocks below, sends up its mimic clouds of spray, and the sheen of its twinkling specks of foam; and then, sliding down the black bank, like a beamy serpentine strip of sunlight, it is caught, swallowed up, and whirled away in the mighty rush of the rolling, roaring river, to which a thousand such diminutive creeks could add no perceptible increase.

The bank opposite this point, is precipitous from the water's edge to the top, and presents no spot where the foot of man could find a resting place. It is bare and almost perpendicular, showing its various strata, and offering to the geologist a rare opportunity for scientific investigation, if not a rich field of research. Its naked aspect is slightly relieved by the deversified colouring of its component parts; and still more by the trickling rills that slip down its rocky surface, and ooze from between its leafy layers of changing consistency and alternate hue.

About one and a half miles above this, you come to Bender's Cave, — sometimes called the Devil's Den, — which is quite a curiosity, and must not be overlooked. It is about twenty feet below the top of the bank, and seems to be a natural hollow in the rock, in shape something

like a large oven, and measuring about forty feet in breadth and depth. On the rocks, at the back of the cave, small quantities of sparry accretion have been formed ; and in spots, an appearance of shining silver specks is presented, which, caused by minute particles of water, may be brushed away in its glistening beauty, by a touch. The floor of the cave is *not* of "pure white sand," but is covered with a mixture of argillaceous and calcareous earth.

Above and below the cave, the rock is perpendicular ; from its mouth, a noble view of the river and banks is afforded ; and from the top of the bank, at the entrance to it, a beautiful, though distant and partial, view of the Falls may be seen. The cavern is dry, and sequestered ; and, situated as it is, offers strong inducements to any anchorite who may desire such an abode. Hermits are invited to call and examine its accommodations ; and it is hoped some one will make it his permanent residence, as such an inhabitant might add something to the romance of this wonderful region.

Having completed your examination of Bender's Cave, follow up the bank of the river, admiring as you pass, the exquisite taste of the Canadian authorities, who, constructing a road along the bank to the Whirlpool, are cutting off

all the timber and underbrush, and leaving the bare cliff without a shrub to fringe its margin, and relieve or soften its naked grandeur. Strange ideas some people have of improvement:—they would spoil a star to make a spangle. O, that Morris might come and sing to them—

“Woodman, spare that tree,
Touch not a single bough,”

and thus arrest the unhallowed work of destruction.

Arrived at the Clifton House, congratulate yourself on having seen every foot of that astonishing channel, cut to such an amazing depth and through such a surprising distance, by the ever-toiling cataract of Niagara, and which is in itself, one of the greatest natural wonders of the material world. The works of Man are the playthings of Time; but these vast walls are the enduring pages of its history, and every stone in the chasm is a bead in the wampum of Ages!

Lundy's Lane, and that “Meteor Hill,” where the celebrated Battle of Niagara—miscalled by some, Bridgewater—was fought, are at Drummondville,—so named in honour of General Drummond, commander of the British forces,—and about three fourths of a mile northwest of

the Falls. Most travellers desire to visit a place so memorable, and it is presumed the reader is not an exception. The road up the bank, in front of the Clifton House, leads directly to the battle-ground. A church, a tavern, and several other buildings, are on the hill, the possession of which was so obstinately contested; and one or two are yet standing, which were there at the date of the conflict. A walk through the burying-ground, on the left side of the ascent, will show where rest the remains of many a gallant soldier, who lost his life by the sad chance of war.

Returning from Lundy's Lane, follow the upper bank to the Pavillion Hotel, from whence you have a fine view of the Falls. Observe the curious shape of the Horse-shoe curve, as seen from this point; and again, from the Barracks; and then continue your walk to Street's Point, from which the most admired and magnificent view of the Canada rapids is presented. The mighty volume of water rolls by in all forms of commotion; plunging down immense and steep ledges, dashing against obstructing rocks, and springing high in the air; swelling here in huge billows, tumbling there in broken surges, raging and rushing on with inconceivable force and velocity towards the awful precipice, from which it is so soon to

be hurled. No art of language can do justice to this scene—it must be witnessed!

A small fragment of the river, bending deeply in just above this point, separates a round island, called Cynthia Island, from the main land, and also another small one at its upper extremity. Opposite Cynthia Island, on the south shore of the stream, is the Burning Spring. The water wells up in a barrel, and is kept in constant ebullition by the rising gas; which, on the application of a lighted candle, instantly ignites, and burns with a clear steady flame. On this spot, formerly stood the village and mills of Bridgewater, which, in the ravages of war did not escape destruction, and have left nothing but a name and a few deserted buildings, to show where once they flourished.

Chippewa is one mile above. It is a fine growing place, but was the head-quarters of McNab, in the Navy Island war, and suffered not a little from the stagnation of business, during the rebellion. It is also memorable for the battle fought near it, which resulted in the triumph of the American arms. The plain on which this celebrated contest took place, lies about two miles above, or south of the village, and is now covered with cultivated fields, and verdant meadows. It is however regarded with deep interest by the

people of both countries, and resorted to by many visitors to the Falls.

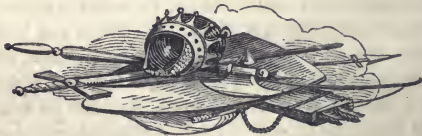
Extend your ramble to this plain, hallowed in the remembrance of two nations, return thence to the ferry, feast your eyes again upon the splendors and glories of Niagara, which you cannot too often behold ; and then cross the river and rest from your labours of curiosity.

READER, — I have thus, in part, performed my office of "GUIDE : " indifferently well, it may be, but with an eye single to your advantage. I have conducted you to every part of Niagara, and to all that there is to be seen at the Falls, and in their immediate vicinity. I need not *now* say, visit every point again, and repeatedly, for your own inclinations will prompt you to do this as often as your term of stay and convenience will permit. You will desire to look upon the cataract at all hours of the day and evening ; to see it in every light and under every shade ; in storm and sunshine ; and in fall and flood. And when you have done this, and are leaving Niagara, perhaps, for ever, you will regard the days and hours in which you listened to its solemn voice, and saw its fearful throes, as among the most delightful you ever

passed, unless in 'love's young dream' when every pulse was a thrill, and every thought a rapture.

But the duty of a Guide, is not merely to point out the path and lead the way, he should endeavour to direct your attention to every feature and appearance of the place to which he has led you, and unless indifferent to the beauty and sublimity of the marvellous scenes he has brought you to behold, — in which case he is a bore of the most intolerable description, — he will communicate his own impressions, in the language of his own enthusiasm, and this, if you do not sympathize with, you can at least, excuse. So far, I have done my devoir.

I am now about to gratify your curiosity as to the principal occurrences, historical and otherwise, not heretofore mentioned, connected by their vicinage, if not more immediately, with the wonderful cataract of Niagara, and the remarkable objects in its neighbourhood; that done, my whole task will be accomplished.



PICTORIAL GUIDE
TO
NIAGARA FALLS.

PART III.

HISTORICAL SKETCH
WITH
ACCIDENTS AND ADVENTURES.

"These are events that should not pass away,
And deeds that claim redemption from decay,
And names that must not wither, but go down
To after ages."——



PICTORIAL GUIDE TO NIAGARA FALLS.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY HISTORY OF THE FALLS—FRENCH ESTABLISHMENTS—
EXPEDITION OF LA SALLE—HENNEPIN'S TOUR OF EXPLORA-
TION—OTHER VISITERS—CHANGES IN THE CATARACT—
WANT OF DATA, ETC.

"Adventurous spirits! from afar they came,
To pioneer a pathway up to fame;
And, freighted with the tidings of salvation,
To christianize each dark benighted nation.
The love of God, and stronger love of gain,
Urge their fleet footsteps o'er the pathless plain;—
They trace the river to its mountain birth,
And covet all the wide expanse of earth:
For valued furs, they proffer in exchange,
Beads, tinsel, gewgaws, and a faith so strange,
The Red-man cannot understand, nor they
Explain—and thus, they preach, press on, and prey."



NOTHING, to one who has seen the Falls, can be indifferent, which relates to them, and especially their early history, of which it is strange, so little is now known. Not the name even, of the lucky European whose eyes were first gladdened by the glories of Niagara,

has come down to us ; nor can conjecture fix upon the date of the discovery. Immortality would have been the recompense of the fortunate finder, had his memory been preserved ; but the night of an utter oblivion rests upon both the man and the event. We should suppose that the honour of this great discovery would have been promptly claimed, and jealously guarded ; but such seems not to have been the case ; and so far from having rival pretensions to judge, there is literally none to accept the award. We can account for this, only, by supposing that the wonders of nature had no power to charm the eye of avarice ; and that a cataract, so vast and magnificent even as this, rated less in the estimation of the gold-seeking, fur-gathering settlers of New France, than any portion, however minute, of the glistening ore, any pelt, however poor, of the castor tribe.

In the early part of the seventeenth century, the French had established themselves on the shores of Lake Ontario, and it cannot be supposed they could long remain in ignorance of the cataract, while they were in constant intercourse with Indians, dwelling at, and around it ; and by whom it was regarded with superstitious reverence. Yet it seems to have excited no attention, or curiosity—and is not even mentioned, that I can learn,

till half a century later. Creuxio, author of a History of Canada, of date, 1660, has it marked on his map; but in the work itself, the name is not to be seen; and, except a bare allusion, perhaps, no further notice of the Falls is found of earlier date, than 1678, when Father Hennepin paid a visit to the scene, had the good sense to appreciate its grandeur, and has left the world indebted to him for the first account of Niagara — though the French had already, and indeed years before, established trading posts on the upper lakes, and penetrated even to the Mississippi itself.

Father Louis Hennepin, a missionary of the Catholic order of St. Francis, came to Canada in the year 1676, continued for two years at Fort Frontenac, engaged in the cure of souls; and then being zealous in the service of God, and emulous in the search of new countries, he packed up his priestly garments, procured a portable chapel, and joined the Sieur de La Salle, in an expedition of discovery, trade, and conversion, to the upper lakes, and the Mississippi; which noble river had been reached, and partly explored, six years previous by Father Marquette, who did not however live to relate the particulars of his journey, but perished not long after, in the country of the Miamies, where he was detained.

The Sieur de La Salle, with Father Hennepin, and others, set sail from Fort Frontenac, in the fall of 1678, and in process of time, made the Niagara river, at the mouth of which he established a trading post, on the site of Fort Niagara. When making the portage, the party, — and most of them doubtless for the first time, — saw the Falls. If we may judge by the example of La Tonti, the historiographer of La Salle's enterprises and adventures, who merely mentions, and that incidentally, that there is a cataract six hundred feet high, between the lakes Erie and Ontario, this sublime spectacle made but a slight impression upon its dull beholders. Father Hennepin, had, however, a more just appreciation of the august scene than his companions, and while endeavouring to describe it, deeply regrets that there was not some one present better fitted for the task.

At some point above the Falls, a vessel of sixty tons burthen was built by La Salle, in which, in the prosecution of their journey, they navigated the lakes Erie, St. Clair, Huron, and Michigan, to the St. Joseph's River, where he built a fort. Crossing the portage to the Illinois river, he built there another fort, from whence, Father Hennepin, with three Canadian boatmen, set off in a canoe, to explore the Mississippi, which he did to

the gulf of Mexico ; and, returning, ascended to the Falls of St. Anthony, which are indebted to him for the pious name they bear, — as also, the river St. Francis.

Hardship, danger, captivity, and many lesser evils, were bravely borne by the worthy Franciscan, who finally made his way back to Niagara, to which a second chapter of his narration is now devoted ; and thence, to Fort Frontenac, from which he had been nearly four years absent.

On his return to France, he published at Paris, in 1684, a description of Louisiana, and at Amsterdam, in 1698, an account of other regions which he had discovered and explored. This latter volume, contains his description of the Falls, which is illustrated by an engraved view of the cataract.

La Hontan, who was in Canada from 1683 to '89, in his work published in 1703, gives a brief notice of the Falls, which he estimated at nearly eight hundred feet high. Charlevoix, the historian of New France, paid them a visit in 1721, and corrected the error of his predecessors, as to the descent. Professor Kalm, of the University of Sweden, was at the Falls, in 1750, of which he gave an account, made public in the following year.

Since that time, others have seen, described and sketched, the wonderful Niagara ; to whose works it is needless to refer, and whose observations have been too recent, or too loose to establish any important fact, or furnish data of any present value.

The description of Father Hennepin, proves that in 1678, the general appearance of the cataract was much the same as at present, but that in one or two important particulars, it has undergone considerable change. The Horse-shoe Fall was then nearly straight, and there was also a third cascade, falling from west to east, at the left of, and at right angles with the other two. It is shown in the engraving, as falling over the Table Rock, and is particularly described in the text. There can be no doubt as to its existence and situation.

When Professor Kalm was at Niagara, seventy three years later, this third cascade was gone. He mentions it however, and states that a few years before, there had been a great downfall of the rocks, when it ceased to flow. Kalm's account of the Falls, confirms the general accuracy of Father Hennepin's description.

Other, but less apparent changes have doubtless taken place, of which we can only conjecture

the quality and extent, from the want of precision in these and other authors, and our ignorance of ancient landmarks. It is probable, nay, almost certain, that the Falls, and particularly the western part of the Horse-shoe cascade, has receded to a considerable distance since the period of Hennepin's visit, or even that of Professor Kalm; but unfortunately, they furnish no data by which we can determine the actual distance gone through, or the ratio of retrocession. Henceforth, it will be otherwise. Correct maps and charts will enable future observers to ascertain how far the Falls will have receded in a given time, and also what alterations take place in their shape and general appearance.

It is highly probable, that more extended researches than the author has had it in his power to make, might throw some additional light upon the past history of the Falls, of which, truth to say, but little is known, where much ought to have been recorded.



CHAPTER II.

ACCIDENTS AT THE FALLS — TRADITIONARY REMINISCENCE —
LOSS OF THE BOAT INDEPENDENCE — OTHER CASUALTIES —
DEATH OF DR. HUNGERFORD — CONCLUDING REMARKS.

“How dreadful must thy summons be, O Death!
To him, who, counting on long years of pleasure,
Is quite unfurnished for the world to come!
In that dread moment, how the frantic soul
Runs to each avenue, and shrieks for help,
But runs and shrieks in vain! the swerveless foe
Pursues her close through every lane of life,
Nor misses once the track, but presses on,
Till forced at last to the tremendous verge,
At once she sinks to everlasting ruin.”



ACCIDENTS are by no means of infrequent occurrence at the Falls, and, indeed, hardly a year passes away, without one or more of a fatal character. The great majority of these, however, originate in unseasonable attempts to cross the river above the cataract, from the mere vanity of daring, or while under the influence of partial intoxication. The lawless pursuit of gain, by illicit importation, occasionally furnishes a victim, and carelessness now and then adds another to the number. British soldiers, attempting to desert, have in several instances, lost

their lives, by drowning ; and these are the principal cases of casualty within our remembrance.

Tradition tells many a tale of persons going over the Falls ; and among others, of an Indian and squaw, in a canoe, who were drawn into the rapids, and hurried down to destruction. It relates, that the Indian, when he found it impossible to escape, coolly laid down his paddle, and, taking up a bottle of whiskey, which it had been the object of his voyage to procure, deliberately applied it to his lips, and kept sucking away, until he was himself sucked in, by the overwhelming flood ; and, thus in a spiritual way, introduced himself to the world of spirits. Whether or not, he took a drop too much, it is impossible to say ; but of this we are certain, that he was loth to lose a drop. The poor squaw paddled away till the last, and that was the last of both. This incident may or may not be apocryphal, — we half suspect it is, — but it illustrates the ruling passion strong in death. But to matters of fact, —

To enumerate all the accidents that have happened at the Falls, would be neither pleasant or profitable ; but as the reader may desire to peruse a record of FATAL DISASTERS, we shall subjoin a brief notice of those, which, having occurred within the last few years, are most readily recalled to mind.

In 1810, the boat Independence, heavily laden with salt, while crossing to Chippewa, filled and sunk, and the Captain, William Valentine, and two of his crew were carried over the Falls. One, by the name of Potter, clung to an oar, and was rescued by a boat from Chippewa, when within a few yards of the rapids. In 1821, two men in a scow, were driven by the wind from the mouth of Chippewa creek, into the river, and swept over the cataract. In 1822, two men from Grand Island, met with a similar fate. In 1825, William Chambers and another person, in venturing too near the rapids, in a canoe, were drawn in, and forced over the Falls. The year 1835, was marked by the sacrifice of another victim, in a similar manner.

In 1839, a sad accident, of an unusual character, occurred. Dr. Hungerford of Troy, while standing near the entrance to the Cave of the Winds, was struck on the head, by a fragment of rock falling from above, and instantly killed. One or two other persons who were with him, were slightly contused. This is the only instance, in which life has been lost by such a casualty, and the only one in which a visiter has ever been seriously injured.

In the summer of 1841, several British soldiers

were drowned, in an attempt to desert by swimming the river. In the fall of the same year, a boat with two men in it, crossing over from Chipewa, capsized and was carried over the Falls. On the thirty-first of January, 1842, a soldier attempted to let himself down the bank near the Museum, intending to cross the river on the ice,—but the rope breaking, he was killed by the fall.

A son of Scotia, flying from a party of infuriate Irishmen, one dark night, in the fall of 1836, ran, by mistake, off the bank, some thirty rods below the Falls, and fell ninety feet, to the bottom of the precipice, where he was found the next day, in a dreadfully mutilated and freezing condition. In that night of suffering, he must have endured more than a hundred deaths; and had his rescue been delayed but a short time longer, would have perished. By careful nursing, he was, however, recovered, and ultimately regained his health. It was a providential escape.

These are the principal accidents that have occurred of late years; and are, we presume, sufficient to satisfy the morbid curiosity of the reader, unless he delights in the records of death. If such be the case, he must seek elsewhere the means of pampering a depraved taste.

CHAPTER III.

VESSELS SENT OVER THE FALLS—SCHOONER MICHIGAN—
SCHOONER SUPERIOR—SHIP DETROIT—SUBLIME SPECTA-
CLE—ADVENTUROUS DARING—DANGER AND RESCUE OF
CHAPIN—OF ALLEN—THE MEED OF MERIT.

“Let the name of the Hero swell high in the song,
And his deeds of destruction the chorus prolong:
A fame born of carnage, and reeking with blood,
Though man deem it glory, is treason to God;
And though honours on earth may the victor await,
Can he hang his red laurels on heaven’s holy gate?
No—the doors of that world where no evil can come,
Are never unbarred at the beat of the drum;
But he whose exertions a single life save,
Is greater than he who gives thousands a grave.”



THREE vessels, have, at as many different periods, been sent over the Falls, to gratify the curiosity of visitors, of whom large numbers were on each occasion, attracted by the novelty of the spectacle. The Michigan, a condemned schooner, was sent over, in 1827. A bison, a bear, and a number of other animals, were put on board, to make the passage. When all was ready, on the appointed day, she was towed into the rapids, and cast loose. Without sustaining any serious injury, she passed the first

ledge. At the second, she was less fortunate : her masts went by the board. Some alarm was now manifested by the passengers, and bruin, deeming a longer stay impolitic, left the vessel, and made for the Canada shore, which he reached in safety. At the last ledge, she was much broken up, and in a wrecked and water-logged condition, reached the precipice, and fell to pieces down the cataract. Except the bear, and a goose or two, none of the animals escaped. About fifteen thousand spectators were present.

In 1829, the schooner Superior was despatched on the same voyage. The dictates of humanity were remembered on this occasion, and no lives were sacrificed for the sake of amusement. The vessel lodged on the rocks, where she lay for several days, and finally went down in the night—piecemeal, it is presumed.

The ship Detroit, before alluded to, was sent down last season. Thousands of people assembled to see her go over the cataract, but were disappointed, as she grounded on the rocks, near the last ledge,—which she was dismasted in descending,—where a part of her hull still remains. A staunch vessel, of smaller size, might, perhaps, reach the brink, unbroken ; but large, and especially, old and weak ones, like this, and the two

preceding, could not by any possibility. It was absurd to expect it.

Sublime, indeed, would be the spectacle of a noble vessel careering down the rapids, and plunging from the cataract's verge at one fearful leap, to the abyss beneath ; but far more sublime must have been the scenes mentioned below, in which man boldly breasted the storm of rapids, and the fear of death, in a frail skiff to rescue an unfortunate fellow-creature from a doom of horror. Such heroism must not pass unrecorded, nor the meed of praise be withheld.

The humane and adventurous daring of a man by the name of Robinson, a resident at the Falls, has been shown in two instances, which deserve to be mentioned. In the summer of 1839, two men were at work on the bridge to Bath Island : one of them, a Mr. Chapin, carelessly let the end of a plank touch the water, by which it was whirled under the bridge, and he thrown into the stream above. He was swept down by the torrent, and his destruction seemed inevitable. By great good fortune, however, he succeeded in reaching a small island — now called by his name — in the midst of the rapids, and not far from the cataract. His condition now appeared hopeless enough — but Robinson thought otherwise. A boat was procured

from the ferry, and taken to Bath Island, from which he embarked for the rescue of Chapin, which he succeeded in effecting, though at the most imminent risk of his own life.

In August, 1841, a Mr. Allen, crossing from Chippewa, to the American side, in a skiff, had the ill luck to break an oar, when his boat became unmanageable, and was soon drawn into the rapids. In descending the ledge, the boat filled and upset; he was thrown out, but providentially, reached the outermost of the Three Sister islands. His situation was now indeed deplorable, and any one but Robinson, would have deemed it hopeless. He failed in the first attempt to rescue Allen, but not disheartened, renewed his efforts on the following day, and again proved successful in saving the life of a fellow-being.

The most consummate skill, in the management of his boat, courage, presence of mind, and physical energy were required in both these instances, and JOEL R. ROBINSON, has won for himself, by the possession, and humane exercise of this rare combination of good qualities, a name that will live, linked with the memory of his deeds, till the Falls cease to be admired, and — to flow.

CHAPTER IV.

PATRIOT OCCUPATION OF NAVY ISLAND—EMPLOY OF THE CAROLINE—MISREPRESENTATION AND RESOLVE—CAROLINE ATTACKED—DURFEE MURDERED—VESSEL FIRED AND SENT OVER THE FALLS—EVACUATION OF THE ISLAND.

"Night and silence came down on the beautiful earth;
Peace hovered on valley and hill;
Hushed became every sound of lamenting or mirth,
And all but the cataract still.
Hark! shrieks pierce the air!
See! shines the red glare!
God! can thy creatures thus ruthlessly dare,
Stain the bright earth with a scene of despair?
Fools! they forget that earth is not hell,
And rebel."



URING the Canada insurrection, in the winter of 1837, after the failure of the attempt on Toronto, and the escape of McKenzie to the United States, that individual, with one Sutherland, and some five or six and twenty others, principally refugees from Canada, at the suggestion of Dr. Cyrenus Chapin, of Buffalo, made a lodgement on Navy Island, in the British dominion, and set up the standard of opposition to the Queen's Colonial Government. The natural sympathy of the American people, with

the patriot cause, as it was termed, of McKenzie and his confederates, soon displayed itself in the arrival of large numbers of volunteers, to reinforce his little band, bringing with them supplies of arms, ammunition, and provisions.

The distance of the island from the American shore, the velocity of the current, and the want of proper boats, rendered the transportation of these volunteers and supplies, to the place of their destination, a work of great labour and difficulty. This circumstance, and the number of persons, from motives of business or curiosity, constantly desirous of passing and re-passing, from the main land to the patriot camp, suggested to Mr. Wells, the owner of a small steam-boat, lying at Buffalo,



THE STEAMBOAT CAROLINE.

called the Caroline, the idea of taking out the necessary papers, and running his vessel as a ferry

boat, between the American shore and the Island, for his pecuniary emolument. Acting upon this suggestion, the Caroline, on Friday, the twenty-ninth of December, left Buffalo for Schlosser; after her arrival, made several trips to and from the island, on account of the owner, and at night was securely moored to the wharf at Schlosser.

Some person, or persons, residents of Canada, then at Buffalo, conveyed intelligence to Colonel McNab, then commanding her Majesty's forces, about three thousand strong, at Chippewa, of the departure of the Caroline, and her destination; probably, mis-stating the object of her owner, and representing her as in the service of the patriots; chartered for their use, and intended to act offensively, against the constituted authorities of the Provincial Government. Under this erroneous impression, that officer resolved to effect her destruction, and made arrangements for putting his design into immediate execution. The force for this expedition, was detailed, and placed under the command of Captain Drew, a retired-on-half-pay Commander of the Royal Navy. At midnight, the men were mustered under the personal superintendence of Colonel McNab; Captain Drew received his final directions, and they embarked in eight boats for the scene of operation.

On the American side, all was still, and no one even dreamed of danger. The fated vessel was full of people, most of whom, unable to obtain accommodations at the tavern, the only dwelling near, had solicited a night's lodging on the *Caroline*; thinking no ill, and anticipating no alarm. The boat was moored at an American wharf, in American waters; the stars and stripes — the flag of their country — floated above them, and they went to sleep in peace, and, as they thought, in safety. There were no arms or munitions on board; and no precautions were taken against surprise, for none were thought necessary. The customary watch was set, the evening waned, and night and slumber shed their sweet influences over all.

The young sailor on watch, was thinking, perchance of home, gazing at the camp-fires on the opposite shore, at Chippewa, or listening, it may be, to the deep roar of the cataract, and fancying there were bars of music in its sweet, solemn tones; when suddenly, he hears something moving on the water — oars! boats! — “Who goes there?” “Friends,” — another moment, and armed men are crowding the peaceful deck of the *Caroline*. — “Cut them down! give no quarters!” There is a fearful rush, — the clashing of weapons, — reports of fire-arms, — forms half-naked,

and faces pale with fear, are springing to the shore, through blows and thrusts that rain above and around them. A moment's pause — another unarmed man appears, gazes wildly round — throws up his hands to ward off the blows aimed at his life, and leaps upon the dock. — A shout — the crack of a pistol — the flying man falls heavily to the earth — blood and brains flow from a new-made wound — a shiver — stillness — an immortal spirit has gone to its great account — Durfee is dead — and the very soil of American Freedom has been outraged by the unprovoked slaughter of one of her sons!

The Caroline is silently receding from the shore, — a spark — a blaze — flames! — Heavens, they have fired her! Quickly the flames spread — onward passes the doomed vessel — the rapids gather about her — and her blazing timbers fling a lurid and fearful glare upon the mad sea of waters — the dark scenery of shores and islands — and the black heaven above.

A bright beacon flares up, and lights the far-off shore, — a shout comes booming over the waters — and a yell of hatred and defiance rolls back from McKenzie's host.

But the Caroline! — on, still on! — Hark! was that a shriek? — it may be fancy; — is that a

human form ? — God only knows !* — On dashes the flame-wrapt vessel — the waters rage more impetuously beneath her — she reels — plunges — the forked flames play like demons around her red-hot pipes and bars, and over her glowing deck — the surges beneath her hiss, and sparkle, and flash — on she drives with a tempest-speed through the torture of fire and flood — she nears the precipice — gains the brink — a fiery plunge — the secrets of the deep were revealed in an instant's flash — the jaws of the abyss opened and shut — then — all was dark, and the Caroline was gone forever !

The destruction of the Caroline, and the murder of Durfee excited the American people along the frontier to a degree almost incredible. In the first fervor of indignation, had any daring mind proposed such a step, and headed the movement, a force might have been poured into Canada, compared to which, the army of McNab would have been a mere cypher. But, although every-body was in motion, although execration was on every

* It is believed, that there were several persons on board the Caroline, when she went over the Falls, who had concealed themselves in terror below, at the time of the attack. Certain it is, that five or six individuals were missing from that night, of whose fate no other supposition is probable.

lip, and arms in every hand, no one thought of crossing the river, and taking vengeance for the deed. The reason was this. They thought the outrage so great, so unparalleled in its atrocity, that the government must take the matter at once in hand ; and that, unless the perpetrators were instantly given up, Canada would be immediately invaded with fire and sword. The people waited for the government, and so a war, a bloody and sanguinary war, was averted.

The force on Navy Island was now about six hundred strong. Compliments at the cannon's mouth had been exchanged with the forces at Chippewa, and one man on the Island had been killed. Preparations were making to cross into Canada, when, by the prompt interposition of General Scott, the Island was evacuated, and the Patriot army dispersed.

Such is a faithful history of the rise, progress, and termination of the Navy Island War, in which one man was killed, and nobody wounded ! And such, also, a concise account of the capture and destruction of the *Caroline*, and the death of Duffee, according to the best of American knowledge and belief.

CHAPTER V.

HERMIT OF THE FALLS—HIS ARRIVAL AT NIAGARA—EFFECT OF THE SCENERY—HIS HABITS, MANNERS, AND ENDOWMENTS—RESIDENCE AND DEATH—OTHER PARTICULARS.

"But soon he knew himself the most unfit
Of men, to herd with Man; with whom he held
Little in common; untaught to submit
His thoughts to others, though his soul was quelled
In youth, by his own thoughts; still, uncompelled,
He would not yield dominion of his mind
To spirits against whom his own rebelled;
Proud, though in desolation; which could find
A life within itself, to breathe without mankind."



RANCIS ABBOTT—the Hermit of the Falls, whose unsocial life, and untimely fate, have made a deep impression upon the public mind, may justly claim the courtesy of a notice, far more lengthy than our limits will permit—we must be brief. There is a charm in every mystery that attracts observation, and excites curiosity. His character is a sealed volume—his life scarcely less so—both are inexplicable. The written pages of his heart and mind are open to the All-Seeing alone.

In humble guise, he came to Niagara in 1829, to remain, perhaps, for a week. He grew

enamoured of the place. The glorious scenery wooed his melancholy spirit by its sublime grandeur. His visit was prolonged,—month after month rolled away, and still he lingered upon its sounding shores. Shunning all society but the companionship of nature; with her only, could his soul stoop to be intimate. The darkest seclusions, the most dangerous paths, and the most august scenes, alone seemed to possess charms for his idiosyncrasy of mind.

Learned, accomplished, travelled, gifted with personal beauty, conventional elegance, and singular powers of pleasing, why should he withdraw from communion with his kind, and choose Nature and Solitude for his only ministers? Music and letters were the only luxuries in which he indulged:—his music was hushed when a step approached,—whatever he wrote, was destroyed almost as soon as written.

Sometimes, but rarely, he would converse, and eloquence seemed to sit upon his tongue—more frequently, he would indulge in moody silence, repelling every attempt to engage him in discourse. He was not misanthropic, for he did not hate or despise, but only avoid, his fellow-men. He was imbued with a deep sense of religion,—and led a blameless life.

He asked permission to build a hut on one of the Three Sisters, which he desired to isolate by a draw-bridge, but was refused. He lived on Iris Island about twenty months, in an old house, yet standing ; and when driven from that, by the intrusion of a family, he erected a hut on the brow of the bank, below, but near Prospect Point, in which he resided till his death, which occurred in June, 1831. He went into the river, below the Falls, to bathe, according to his usual custom, and was shortly missed by the ferryman. His body was found at Fort Niagara, ten days after his decease, and removed to the Falls for burial. His age was about twenty-eight years.

An allowance, ample for his maintenance, was furnished by his friends in England, — his father is rector of a parish in that country. Little else is known of his history, than we have here related. His unsocial and other eccentricities, have given him the title of ‘Hermit of the Falls,’ and much curiosity is manifested by visitors, as to his character and habits. He sleeps in death, by the scenes he loved while living, — peace to his repose !



CHAPTER VI.

MASSACRE AT THE DEVIL'S HOLE — BRITISH CONVOY — INDIAN
AMBUSCADE — ATTACK, SURPRISE, DEFEAT, CATASTROPHE
— ESCAPE OF STEADMAN AND ONE OTHER — RELICS, ETC.

“War mounts his iron car — and at his wheels
In vain soft Pity weeps, and Mercy kneels;
He waves his flaming dart, and o’er the plains,
In mournful silence, Desolation reigns.
What tides of ruin mark his ruthless way!
How shriek the fiends, exulting o’er their prey!
In vain, with trembling heart the coward turns,
In vain, with generous rage the valiant burns;
One common ruin, one promiscuous grave,
O’erwhelms the dastard, and receives the brave!”



THE Devil's Hole, the upper bank, receding from the river, and leaving the rock nearly bare, forms a sort of amphitheatre, bounded on one side by the precipice, and on the other, by the hills that circle round it. The road across this plain or hollow, passing the very brink of the fearful gulf with the demon-name, rises the bank or hill, in either direction, and stretches away to the Falls and Lewiston. A thick forest covered, — at the time of which we speak — the little vale or plain, and the ascent by which it was environed, rendering it one of

those advantageous points for an ambuscade, of which Indian sagacity so frequently availed itself during the early struggles of the country.

In 1759, after the English had obtained possession of Fort Niagara, and established a post at Schlosser; and while the war with the French was yet raging, a supply of provisions and stores for the latter place, left Fort Niagara, under the convoy of about one hundred British regulars. Nothing disturbed their march for many miles; and at length, the close military order they had hitherto preserved, was gradually relaxed, and they straggled carelessly on — the drivers whistling merrily to their sluggish oxen, the soldiers scattered along the banks of the stream, gazing eagerly at the romantic and beautiful scenery which its course constantly presented, and impatient to catch a glimpse of the wonderful cataract, the sound of whose mighty roar had been for miles in their ears, — some, pressing ahead with an animated and impatient curiosity; some, lingering, to feast their eyes on the sublime progress of the river, threading its walled and winding passage; and others, lounging indolently behind, and often pausing to rest in the cool shade, for the season was summer, and the day intensely hot; — a fatal sense of fancied security had fallen upon all.

The Indians, on the frontier, were devoted to the French interest, and this was too good an opportunity to be lost, of showing their zeal in the cause of their allies, and striking terror to the hearts of their enemies. Farmer's Brother, a distinguished Chief of the Senecas, with a band of his best warriors, to the number of several hundred, ambushed the party, at the Devil's Hole, extending his line along the hill, quite around the little plain, leaving only a narrow entrance by the road, thus cutting off every hope of escape. Silent as the grave, and yet watchful as the eye of Fate, lay these human tigers, waiting for their prey.

On came the convoy, in the broken, formless, scattered order we have described, — each pursuing his march as best suited himself. Without a suspicion of danger, they reached the valley, and pausing at the Devil's Hole, huddled around its brink, and knew not that death lay couching in the awful depth that confronted their gaze. When all were in the snare, the net was sprung.

Suddenly, the profound stillness that had hitherto, unbroken except by the cataract's roar, reigned over all, was burst by a tremendous volley of fire-arms, and the more terrible yells of the savages, who closed in, and rushed upon their prey. There was no time to rally, for prayers,

or for defence. The tomahawk and the knife were at their deadly work. Drivers were brained in their seats, and soldiers stabbed where they stood. So sudden was the onset, and so violent the assault, that half the convoy was killed in the first moments of surprise, and the remainder thrown into hopeless confusion, almost before they had time to raise an arm or level a gun. Never was surprise more successful, or destruction more complete. The little run poured its torrent again over the precipice, and down the chasm—but it was a stream of blood! Men, horses, wagons, cattle, stores, all in one promiscuous mass were forced over the bank, and dashed to pieces on the rocks below, while the fiendish yells of the savages drowned their shrieks and groans, and thundered from the rocks and cliffs above, wild, terrible, and triumphant!

But two persons escaped. One, a Mr. Steadman, striking spurs into his horse, a fine and fleet steed, and dashing forward at the first moment of alarm, succeeded in breaking through the Indian line, and making good his retreat. He reached Fort Schlosser in safety, and without a wound, though his clothes and saddle, were pierced with balls. The other, a soldier, who was forced down the precipice, in the general fall, was providen-

tially caught by the belt, on the pointed limb of a tree, where he hung, concealed by the foliage, from the lynx-eyed search of the Indians, who despatched every thing they could find, that had life — until the return of night and stillness, convinced him the foe had retired, when he cautiously descended; and groped his toilsome way to Fort Niagara, which place he reached, with the first intelligence of the fate of his party.

It is but a few years since, bones, bits of broken wagons, and many other relics of this fearful catastrophe, were to be seen at the bottom of the gulf; but they are now concealed beneath the rubbish, swept away by the stream, or returned to dust.

The Indians held Mr. Steadman in great respect, ever after his so narrow and fortunate escape, believing that he was a "Great Medicine," and gifted with magical powers. They gave him, it was said, all the land he had encompassed in his flight, which would include all between the river and a line from the Devil's Hole to Fort Schlosser. His heirs set up a claim to this tract in after years, but as they could prove no formal grant, and of course establish no title, it was denied.

CHAPTER VII.

NOAH'S FOLLY:—BRILLIANT CONCEPTION—UNPARALLELED
PROCLAMATION—MAGNIFICENT PAGEANTRY—MEMORIALS
OF THESE WONDERFUL EVENTS—SUBLIME FINALE.

“Hey, diddle diddle,
The cat's in the fiddle,
The cow's jumped over the moon,
The little dog laughed,
To see such a craft,
And the dish ran away with the spoon.”

“Ride a cock horse to Banbury cross,
To see an old woman upon a white horse,
With rings on her fingers, and bells on her toes,
She will have music wherever she goes.”



IN THE year of Adam, 5586, a learned and worthy Hebrew, bearing the name of Mordecai Manuel Noah, conceived the luminous and brilliant idea, that he was the identical 'Manuel destined to gather together the dispersed and persecuted people of that once powerful and prosperous, but now wandering and wretched race, the Jews; and selected Grand Island for the Ark of safety, Arrarat, or New-Jerusalem, of which he was to be the Noah, Proprietor, Prince and Patriarch.

This remarkable personage, in whom were

combined the great names, and great qualities of some of the most remarkable personages in Jewish history, thereupon appointed himself "Governor and Judge of Israel," and — having put forth a proclamation, announcing this important fact, enumerating the many offices of trust, honour and profit, which he had then-before filled, as Consul to Tunis, Sheriff of New-York, etc, reviving the Jewish Nation, ordering a census, levying a capitation tax, abolishing polygamy, recognizing the fraternity of the American Indians as the lost tribes, directing many other general and particular matters of faith and practice, morals and government, naming a day of thanksgiving, and inviting all the scattered remnants of Judaism in all parts of the earth, to come forthwith to the United States, New-York, Grand Island, Arrarat, the City of Refuge, and submit to his spiritual and temporal, gubernatorial and judicial authority, not forgetting to bring their gold, silver, and precious stones, — proceeded to the west to lay the corner stone of the Synagogue, with solemn and appropriate ceremonies, and to found, consecrate, and eternize, the mighty, magnificent, and many-peopled City of Arrarat !

But, alas ! the site of the city was an untouched wilderness : Buffalo was the nearest place of any

magnitude, and there, accordingly, the grand, imposing, and never-sufficiently-to-be-remembered ceremonial took place. The corner stone was borne in solemn state, to the Episcopal church of St. Paul ; the self-appointed Ruler of the Hebrews, the self-constituted Governor of the Jews, and the self-created Judge of Israel, in the flowing robes and rich vestments* of his assumed functions — “pride in his port, exultance in his eye,” — himself headed the vast procession, composed of more than three hundred men, women, children, idlers, loafers, and ragamuffins. The inaugural address delivered, and the exercises over, the numerous assemblage, the Governor, Judge, and Corner Stone retired in the same order of procession, with the same pomp, decorum, and dignity.

The corner-stone was soon after planted on Grand Island, but never took root, and grew up to a Synagogue ; and the only memorials of these great and wonderful events, and the great and wonderful city which was to be, but was not, are to be found in the Books of the Chronicles of the times, and the monument, erected on the Island by the Governor, Judge, and Ruler of the Jews, which is composed of brick, mortar, and wood,

* An old tragedy-dress, borrowed from the Park Theatre.

which is yet standing, and which bears on its eastern front, a stone tablet, on which are engraved the following words, figures, and characters.



שמע שראליי אלתיני
ויואתר

ARRARAT,

A CITY OF REFUGE FOR THE JEWS:

Founded by Mordecai M. Noah; in
the month Tizri, 5586,

September, 1825, in the 50th year of
A merican Independence.

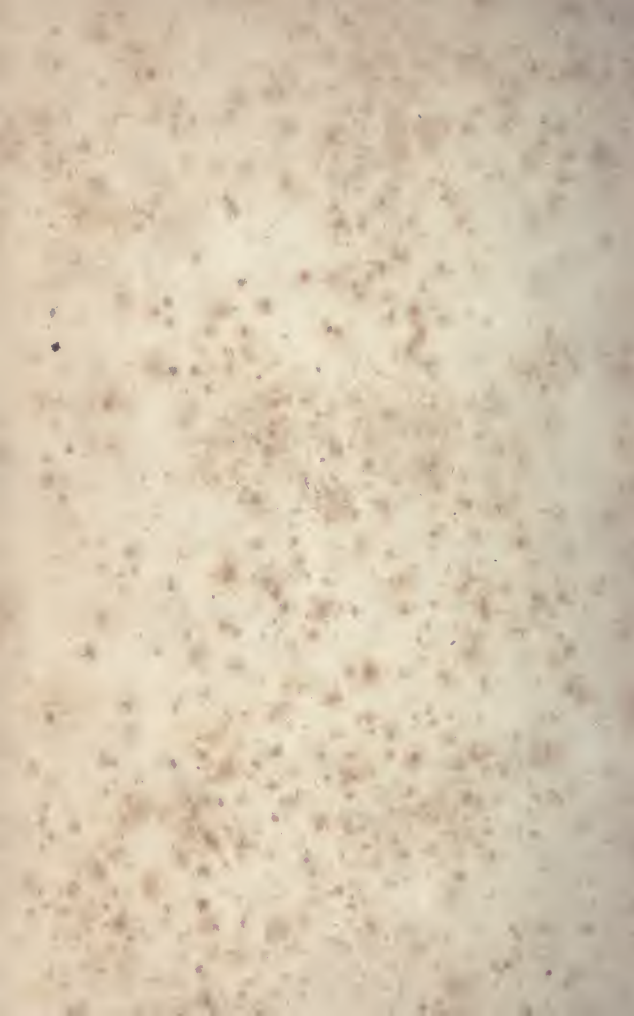
The foreign Priests, and Rabbis of the Jews, could not, and would not—at all events, did not, recognize or ratify the self-assumed powers of Mordecai Manuel Noah, Rabbi Ben Rabbi Ben Humbug, and the whole scheme, the city, the synagogue, and the offices of Governor and Judge vanished into thin air. Here endeth the history of Mordecai the Jew.





















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